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PREFACE

This publication has been brought out with a view to popularising the concept and usefulness of *Surya Namaskar* (Salutations to the Sun), which has been practised over the ages in India.

I was toying with the idea of getting ready this valuable publication for several months, though the preparation of the text took an year and more. Finally, with the encouragement provided by many donors and helpful suggestions of the printer and the artist, I am happy that this useful publication has eventually been got ready.

The Main encouragement was derived from the helpful attitude of the following donors who have contributed each an amount of Rs. 1,000/-: (1) His Holinees Sri Jagatguru Shankaracharya, Dakshinamnaya Sri Sharada Peetham, Sringeri. (2) Shri M. Gopalakrishnan, Chairman and Managing Director, Indian Bank, Madras. (3) Managing Trustee, Sundaram Charities (T.V.S. Group of Industries), Madras. (4) Dr. N. Mahalingam, Businessman and philanthropist, Madras. (5) Shri S. Radhakrishna, Managing Director, Amrutanjan Ltd., Madras. (6) Dr. G. S. Keshavamurthy, Managing Director, South India Viscose, Ltd., Coimbatore. I acknowledge with profound gratitude the financial assistance provided by the donors.

Shakti Enterprises, (208, Triplicane High Road, Madras), the printers of this book, have done a magnificent job in bringing out this attractive publication. The printers, Shri K. Ramaswamy, Shri K. Bhaskar and Shri G. Abraham, readily agreed to accept my various suggestions in the course of processing and printing this book. The artist, Sri M.R. Gopu Kamath, also spared no pains in illustrating this book beautifully. I am grateful to the printers and the artist for the valuable cooperation extended to me.

I am deeply indebted to Vidya Vachaspati Dr. R. Nagaswamy, Director of Archeology (Retd.), Government of Tamil Nadu, for finding time to contribute an appropriate Foreword to this book.

The attractive illustrations in this book have been facilitated by Shri. M.S. Viswanath, President, International Yogasana Federation (Yoga Sports), Bangalore, for agreeing to demonstrate a Surya Namaskar pose in his own inimitable way.

I have also been benefited much by the frequent discussions and helpful suggestions of my colleague, Shri P.A.Seshan (Leo), Financial Editor, *'The Hindu'*, Madras.

The Manager of the Ramakrishna Math, Madras, was kind enough to permit me to reprint the English translation of *Aditya Hridayam,* appearing at the end of this book.

I shall be immensely happy if this effort of mine proves useful to those unfamiliar with the concept and practice of *Surya Namaskar* and appreciated by others who are already practising this valuable daily routine which has a revitalizing effect on both body and mind.

MADRAS
September 1991

YOGESWAR

FOREWORD

Vidyavacaspati Dr. R. Nagaswamy

For one steeped in Indian tradition, *Surya* (Sun) in His different forms is verily the Supreme Power that is adored, worshipped, meditated and perceived. It is as much the same, five thousand years ago when the *Vedic* Rishis saw in Him the Universal Consciousness and praised Him in delightful poetry, as it is today. The same poetry in the form of Hymns remains the mystic guide to this day, chanted by millions of Indians.

This poetic vision, it is believed, infuses knowledge in man, which expands beyond the narrow terrestrial limits and makes him one with the Universe. The embodiment of this vision is the *Gayatri Mantra,* (Salutation to *Savita,* the Sun), the most sacred *Mantra* on the lips of devout Hindus from time immemorial.

Savita (Sun) is the singular vision of the Universe (जगदेक चक्षु:). He prods the Universe into activity, He brightens it, and plunges it into darkness again.

He is the embodiment of the Vedas. It is He who infuses the three essential qualities *(Trigunas)* in man -- *Satva* (Benign), *Rajas* (Vigorous), and *Tamas* (Docile). He is identical in that sense with the Hindu Trinities -- *Brahma* (Creator), *Vishnu* (Protector), and *Siva* (Destroyer).

All forms of energy emanate from *Surya* and finally resolve in Him, and so the devout Hindu prays:

'Let that *Savita* lead me on to noble acts.'

देवोवस्सविता प्रार्पयतु श्रेष्ठतमाय कर्मणे ||

The Sun's innumerable rays are called His 'Thousand Eyes' -- (सहस्राक्ष). The descent of the rays on earth is conceived as the innumerable feet of Godhood (सहस्रपाद्). He is, therefore, called the Superman -- the *Mahapurusha* (महापुरुष).

As the Sun rises, traverses through the sky and sets, He is said to take three strides, and so praised as 'One with three Strides' -- (त्रिधोरुकाय). He is also called the One with three great exploits -- *Trivikrama* (त्रिविक्रम:).

The Supreme circular disc of the Sun is the symbol of the Law of Space and Time *(Kala Chakra* and *Dharma Chakra)*.

The Sun is Evershining *(Vishnu)* — from darkness He arises and thereby brings solace to humanity. He is the Benevolent *(Siva)*. He lays down the righteous course for humanity *(Narayana)*.

Even when the Gods are conceived in different forms, the Sun is considered the support of all Forms. The different subsects among the Hindus recognized this underlying unity. For example, the worshippers of *Siva* called Him *Siva Surya,* while the devotees of Vishnu called Him *Surya Narayana.* For the followers of all sects, the Ultimate was always called the Boundless Light of Knowledge.

All the knowledge and visualisation of *Surya* are expressed through various Hymns, from the *Vedas* to the present day.

There are several such expressions. However, I may cite one, the *Suryopanishad,* which is included among the 108 *Upanishads,* and which sums up the Supreme status given to the worship of *Surya.*

Surya is *Bhagavan* -- the Supreme. He is the Thousand - rayed *Sahasramsuh (सहस्रांशु:),* Who is the Form of All *(Sarvaswarupin)*.

The Sun God is described in the *Vedas* in different ways. In the morning, He is adored by the *Rg. Veda,* in the mid-day by the *Yajur Veda,* and in the evening by the *Sama Veda.* He is *Ravi, Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, and Bhaskara.* He is verily the *Trimurti* (Trinity).

The Yogins who are called *Urdhvapandhinah,* (ऊर्ध्वपन्थिन:), worship *Bhagavan Surya* (Sun). By the adoration of *Surya,*

they have been able to lead a healthy and full life and obtain progeny, wealth, strength and food.

There is no Hindu ritual which is not associated with the Sun in one way or the other, seeking His blessings. To evoke the Sun's blessings, the traditional way is to take a bath and stand in a clean level ground, facing the east He must assume a prayerful attitude of mind and perform *Surya Namaskars*. Full details for performing the *Namaskars* are given by the author of this book with a wealth of detail and appropriate illustrations.

All those who desire health, wealth, knowledge, memory, peace and longevity should perform *Surya Namaskars*, and I commend this book to them.

Madras,
September, 1991

Surya Namaskar

(Prostrations to the Sun)

सूर्य आत्मा जगत: तस्थुष: च ।।

Sun is the sustainer of the Universe, comprised of movables and immovables.

—Rig Veda: 1, 115-1

The word 'Surya' is derived from the Vedic *sur* or *svat* 'to shine'. 'Surya' means 'Sun' and 'Namaskar' means 'bowing down' in Sanskrit. Surya Namaskar means offering prostrations to the Sun.

Down the ages, devout people of all sects have prayed to the Sun as the giver of light, heat and life and the Benefactor of Man.

Man has worshipped this fiery orb from ancient times as a symbol of universal energy and immortality. The continuity of Sun worship from prehistoric times to the present day speaks of its universalitiy and popularity among all classes of human society.

The first worship of man was of the Sun. The glory of the solar orb, its beauty and splendour, its primal role in the creation and maintenance of life, its regularity in diffusing light and enlightening the whole earth had secured for the Sun a preeminent place and importance from the very beginning of history.

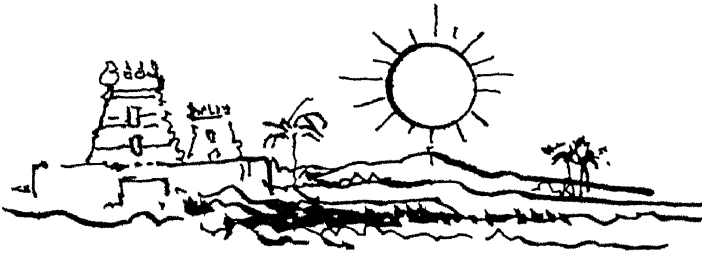
The worship of this visible divine entity dates back from remote antiquity. It was practised throughout the period of human history.

Adoration of the Sun was the chief worship among the Caucasian tribes.

The ancient Persians connected their god 'Mithra' with the Sun, as also did the Greeks their 'Helios'.

The Spanish conquerors of Mexico found a people who maintained splendid temples dedicated to the Sun.

Sun worship flourished in Peru and among the Indians of North America. The Peruvians held the Sun to be the ancestor and founder of the dynasty of the Incas, who made Sun worship the State religion and reigned as the representatives of the Sun-God.

Sun-worship prevailed in Egypt from pre-historic times. The sun-god was worshipped as 'Ra', established during the

fifth Dynasty (2750 B.C.). and the word 'Radiation' stems from it.

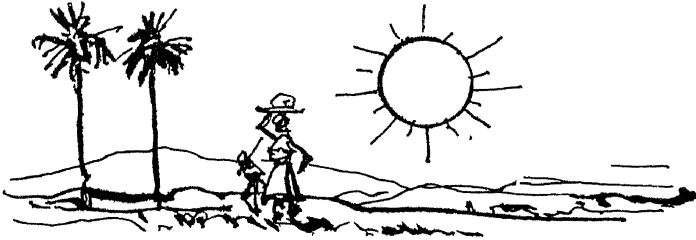
From Egypt, solar worship spread to Western Europe and Greece. Helios was the Greek God of Light and from Helios is derived the word 'Heliotherapy' which means healing by exposure to the sun's rays. Both Hellenes and Barbarians were accustomed to greet the rising and the setting Sun with prostrations.

The Sun-God was worshipped in ancient Mesopotamian civilizations, including the Assyrians and Babylonians.

Romans worshipped this great luminary in the form of Mithras and dedicated many temples in many parts of Europe from early times.

The Aztec, Inca and Mayan civilizations had elaborate temples dedicated to the solar God.

In North Europe also, the Sun was worshipped under different names.

Zoroaster founded worship of the Sun and the ancient Persians connected their god 'Mithra' with the Sun. Sun worship persists even today among the Parsis who turn towards the Sun when they worship.

Other great Sun-worshippers include the Japanese. Some references to Sun-worship are found in the Buddhist literature also.

2 HINDU SCRIPTURES

From time immemorial, men from every age and from every corner of the earth have worshipped the Sun as an embodiment of natural and supernatural powers. Since the Sun dispels darkness and bestows life and warmth, it became an object of worship from ancient times.

In India, Sun-worship has been popular from prehistoric times. The Hindu scriptures are full of hymns of praise of the Sun-God, extolling His qualities as a life-giver, protector and destroyer of evil and darkness.

Surya is one of the important deities in the Vedas and personifies the Sun. The Sun is referred to as the 'Lord of Creation'. This heavenly body each morning wakes the universe and men from sleep. The Sun is also extolled as the guardian and preserver of cattle and the companion of travellers.

Vedic sacrifices were coordinated to the year and the season and proclaimed the dominance of the Sun as the Lord of the Year and the Seasons.

In the early Vedic age, the Sun was invoked and worshipped and many functions were attributed to Him. He was worshipped under various names. As *Surya,* He is the giver of light and heat. As *Savitr,* He is the instigator of all including the thoughts arising in the human mind. As *Vishnu,* He is the Creator of all and is considered the God of Fertility. As *Pushan,* he is the Guardian of cattle and crops, food and vegetation. In this manner, the Sun-god has control over all the animate and inanimate objects and has been identified with the Supreme Being since Vedic times.

In the later Vedic age also, the Sun continued to be invoked in His various aspects, known by various names.

In the *Upanishadic* period, the Sun was worshipped as the giver of life and heat, creater of night and day, and the God of vegetation and fertility. The *Suryopanishad* states that persons who worship the Sun become powerful, active and intelligent and acquire long life.

In the time of the *Satapatha Brahmana,* the number of the *Adityas* (Suns) was decided as twelve, representing the twelve months of the year.

In the time of the *Puranas,* these *Adityas* got wide popularity. The *Vishnu Purana* gives a detailed description of all the twelve *Adityas,* though they were variously enumerated in different texts. All the twelve *Adityas* were fused, later on, into one single Sun-god called *Dvadasatman,* in the lexicons.

Surya, the Vedic God of Light, was portrayed generally as riding a golden chariot that traverses the sky with a watchful eye observing the good and bad deeds of both mortals and immortals.

Vivasvat represents the Rising Sun. He is the first sacrificer and the ancestor of the human race.

The *Taittiriya Aranyaka (Arunopanishad)* is a well-known section of the *Upanishad* recited on Sundays and special occasions by the Hindus to propitiate the Sun, particularly in South India.

The Sun figured prominently in the *Brahmanic* rituals as the best manifestation of the Supreme Power. The Sun is worshipped even today as the purest symbol of the Supreme and the source of eternal life. *'Svastika'*, the symbol of the Sun, represents eternity.

'Among all shining objects, I am the Sun', proclaims the *Gita.*

The Kaustuba on the chest of Vishnu is the Sun Himself.

In the *Puranas* also, the method of Sun-worship is elaborately described. In the *Ramayana,* there are innumerable references to the Sun. It is stated that Lord Rama learnt Surya Namaskar from sage Agastya which contributed to His success in the battle against Ravana. The family in which the Lord Himself was born as Rama originated from Surya. In the *Maha Bharata,* the glorious hero, Karna, was born of Surya.

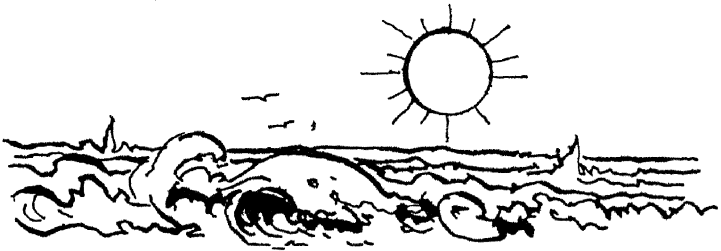
References to *Tantric* practices in Sun worship date back from the 8th century A.D.

3 SUN—THE PLANET

Sun is the largest and brightest of all the luminaries of the Solar System. It is the nearest star around which the earth revolves.

Sun is a self-luminous body -- a glowing globe of gas in atomic form, held together by its own gravity. It has a diameter of 864,000 miles and mean density about a quarter that of the earth. It is 109 times the earth's diameter and 333,000 times its mass. In volume, it is 1,300,000 times the size of the earth. Its temperature varies from $10,000^0$ F. at the surface to about $28,000,000^0$ F. near the centre.

The sun's distance from the earth is about 93,000,000 miles. Although the sun is entirely gaseous, its distance creates the optical illusion that it has a surface.

The temperature inside the Sun is so hot that nuclear reactions can take place, and it is from this transmutation of matter - the conversion of some of the hydrogen into helium - that the Sun gets its energy. This complicated process results in four atoms of hydrogen forming one atom of helium, with about one per cent of matter left over, which becomes converted into radiant energy. The total amount of matter actually being converted into energy has been estimated at 4 million tons per second.

The Sun's energy comes from the conversion of hydrogen to helium in the course of which matter is transformed into radiant energy. The energy released constantly in its core by nuclear processes slowly works its way to the surface, where it is radiated into space. This is the Sunlight we see and the radiated heat we feel.

The Sun emits electromagnetic energy over all wave-lengths, from X-rays to radio waves. Sunshine includes not only the visible portion of radiation from the sun, but also invisible ultraviolet and infrared rays. Infrared radiation has its chief merit in its heat-producing quality. Nearly one half of total solar radiation received at the surface of the earth is infrared.

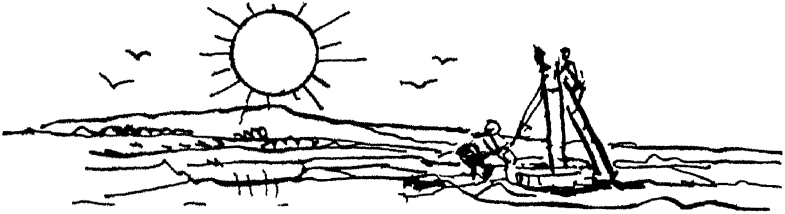
Radiation from the Sun is the source of the operation of most natural phenomena on the surface of the earth. The amount and distribution in time and space of the solar radiation which is intercepted by the earth are the prime cause of weather and climate.

Ozone, which is stimulating to our body by increasing vitality, is produced by the action of the sun's rays.

4 SOURCE OF ALL POWER

Sun is the 'Powerhouse' of the Solar System. Its mighty gravitational power holds the planets on their courses. Its radiation warms the entire solar system. Its visible light, reflected from the surfaces and atmospheres of the planets, makes them visible to us. -- No planet shines by its own light -- only by reflected sunlight.

Sun is the only power responsible for the creation, preservation and destruction of all the things on earth, animate and inanimate. Without the light and heat of the Sun, our Earth would be a frozen, lifeless globe.

The Sun's rays supply the Earth with heat and light, contribute to the growth of plant life, evaporate water from the ocean and other bodies of water, play a role in the

production of winds, and perform many other functions that are vital to the existence of life on earth.

All the power represented in the winds and in dams and rivers and all the power contained in natural fuels such as wood, coal, and oil is nothing more than sunlight.

Sun's energy is the source of clouds, rain and of the waterfall's hydraulic energy. It is the ultimate source of almost all the energy utilized by industry in the form of water, power, fuels and wind.

Sun is the source of the pageant of the seasons as also the year, day and night, as part of Time.

All the colours in the sky and the gardens are caused by sunlight.

5 SUSTAINER OF LIFE

The radiant energy received from the Sun is responsible for the development and continued existence of all living organisms on earth. The earth is habitable since the Sun's rays supply us with heat, light, food, fuel and power.

Sun, the sustainer of the entire Solar System, has been radiating millions of watts of energy towards the earth in a perennial flood with little change of intensity for millions of years. This solar energy is directly harnessed and converted into usable forms of energy, namely, heat and electricity.

Sunlight transforms itself into life and provides energy for every vital activity. The energy of the solar rays is transformed into electrical energy, and then into chemical energy, namely, into the essential fuel for all vital processes.

Sun is thus the source of energy that originally made life on earth possible, and the one that constantly sustains it. Life is not possible without the Sun since the Sun is the giver and sustainer of life.

Sunlight is essential from birth. The infant, immediately after birth, sees and needs sunlight.

Sunlight contributes to the development of the vegetable kingdom without which neither animals nor man could live. Plants transform water and carbonic acid gas into essential substances like oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, starch, sugar, etc., by extracting energy from sunlight. Sun is thus responsible for the manufacture of food at a macrocosmic level.

The Sun, with its warm soothing rays, bestows its beneficial powers to various herbs and minerals which are useful in the treatment of many diseases.

Plants are nature's sugar manufacturers. Their green leaves utilize the radiant energy of the Sun to make simple sugars which are then stored as starch in the seeds and tubers.

All the vitamins in plants and vegetables are created by the rays of the Sun. The plants and herbs that we use as medicines derive their medicinal qualities from the Sun itself.

6 SURYA NAMASKAR FOR ALL

1. Surya Namaskar can be performed by all men and women, slim or overweight, young or old. Children enjoy the easy, flowing movements which enhance their natural flexibility. The 12 Positions are of special benefit also to the elderly and those approaching middle age whose muscles have become weaker and the spine stiffer by giving up regular exercise and games. Even persons in poor health may practice them after a medical check-up and they become strong and revitalized.

2. Every person with a sound body in any walk of life may start to practice Surya Namaskar from any age after eight and continue them throughout their entire life span.

3. It is never too late to start Surya Namaskars. However, if they are practised regularly from youth, the muscles will become supple and the internal organs strong so that good health could be maintained till the evening of life and a multitude of ailments avoided. They are an insurance for a fit and healthy old age.

4. It is always best to start young as young persons can master the practices easily. Those past the prime of life may do the Namaskars moderately according to the condition of their muscles, internal organs and general health.

5. Persons who are mere 'skin-and-bones', as also those having a fat body with a protruding belly can practice the Namaskars to the best of their ability provided they have no organic disease. They will look nice after regular practice for a few months.

6. Persons having any organic defect or functional disorder but supple enough to do the Namaskars easily should take

the advice of a doctor who can recommend the number and duration of the postures suitable to each person individually.

7. Those who have body deformities and those who have suffered any serious dislocation need not give up Surya Namaskars altogether in despair but take the advice of a therapist and perform according to their ability.

7 SURYA NAMASKAR FOR WOMEN

1. Surya Namaskars should be suspended by women during the menstrual period.

2. Women in the family way may perform some Positions of the Namaskar till they complete the fourth month of pregnancy. The Namaskars should be discontinued till childbirth.

3. Women may resume the practice after they get back to their normal state of health after delivery, say, within two to three months. After this period, they may gradually increase the number till they reach the usual quota within about four weeks, following the same rules as for men.

8 SURYA NAMASKAR FOR CHILDREN

1. Though children are basically more flexible than adults, those under eight years should not start Surya Namaskars as a daily routine like adults. As their spines are too weak and their bones and muscles are still growing, forcing them to do the Namaskars may cause deformity of the spine and other disorders if performed incorrectly. They may also practice hastily and their attention may not stay on what they are doing.

2. Since children within the age range of 8 to 12 are constantly on the go, they need and like outdoor games and sports. They love to run, kick, tumble and jump and prefer activities that are basically aerobic which are more conducive to

their growth than the systematic practice of Surya Namaskars like adults.

Children in this age group may, however, watch the elders and practice a few Namaskars so that they may develop an aptitude to practice them later in life when they grow up into full-grown adults. While practicing the Namaskars, they should not overtax their ability which may affect their growing bones.

3. Boys and girls in their pre-pubertal age may learn Surya Namaskar under the guidance of an expert which will promote their physical and mental growth. They should not practice with strain as they are not physically mature and do not have the muscle control of adults. Besides, their vital organs and glands and their nervous system will not have been sufficiently developed and the endocrine balance may not have matured. The full Namaskars, synchronised with breathing, should be taken by them only after they attain full maturity.

9 SURYA NAMASKAR AS EXERCISE

1. Surya Namaskar is an ancient yogic exercise which is performed before the rising sun. It was developed in India thousands of years ago by illumined sages as the best way to pay tribute to the source of all creation and life.

2. There is no subtle philosophy behind worshipping the Sun by Namaskars (prostrations), no costly ritual and no mysticism. The worship revolves round 12 simple movements of the body and is non-sectarian.

3. The prostrations, practiced from ancient times by devout Hindus as an integral part of their daily life, have also caused some modern adaptations oriented to a course of physical exercise.

4. You may incorporate the Namaskars in your daily routine of yoga exercises.

5. If they are performed as a preliminary to the practice of Asanas, it will limber up and warm your whole body and make it easier for you to do the Asanas. They may also be performed on their own.

6. If there is little time to practice Asanas on any day, Surya Namaskars may be practiced as a substitute, each Namaskar taking only about half a minute. You will feel relaxed and refreshed after the practice as in the case of Asanas.

7. There are several variations in the practice of this dynamic exercise. The version given in this book is based on Yoga Asanas combined with breathing.

8. Each Namaskar itself incorporates the principle of the following three popular Yoga postures within the sequence of the twelve movements: 1. Talasana, 2. Pada Hastasana, and 3. Bhujangasana.

9. Those who are unable to practice Asanas for any reason and older people who have been very inactive over the years may practice Surya Namaskars as a 'Keep-Fit' exercise.

10 WHEN TO PRACTICE

1. Starting the day with Surya Namaskar will keep you fresh for the whole day.

2. Practice them facing the rising sun, if possible. They are practiced traditionally at sunrise. Do not practice them when the sun is hot or at night. When practiced in the early morning hours while facing the rising sun, ultraviolet rays are absorbed through the skin. Vitamin D is also produced.

3. Surya Namaskars performed early in the morning removes stiffness in the body resulting from the horizontal position in which it has rested during the night. It will also remove laziness and invigorate the whole body.

4. Practice the Namaskars in the morning after finishing your toilets. If a bath is to be taken soon after performing the Namaskars to suit one's convenience, allow the body to cool off in Savasana after the exercise.

5. Surya Namaskar, as exercise, should always be practiced on an empty stomach. They should not be practiced immediately after the main meal of the day. Persons who practice in the evening must not take any light refreshments or drinks just before practice.

11 HOW MANY AND HOW LONG?

1. Each Namaskar consists of a cycle of 12 connected Positions, which are progressive stages of one continuous exercise. Go through all of them consecutively, one leading to the next, which constitutes a single Namaskar. Repeat as many Namaskars as possible, at an even cadence without getting tired.

2. It is best to perform the Namaskars slowly at your own pace, pausing a little at the limit of each Position. Each Position should be held for about five seconds before proceeding to the next.

3. The Namaskars can also be performed more swiftly with very little pause between the different Positions, but this should be attempted only after mastering all the 12 Positions. Beginners should go slow in the early stages of the practice. Children may perform the Namaskars more quickly than adults.

4. It is enough if you practice Surya Namaskars for 10 to 15 minutes, resting in-between, if you are practicing this alone. If you are practicing the Namaskars along with other Asanas, perform only three cycles at a time in the beginning and gradually increase the number by three every week, according to your capacity, until you reach 12.

5. It is better to practice a few Namaskars carefully and systematically with the appropriate breath cycle rather than rushing through a large number hurriedly and carelessly.

12 HINTS FOR PRACTICE

1. Practice the Namaskars in the open air or in an airy room.
2. Surya Namaskars can be performed at home or in any open space, either singly or in a group. They need no special equipment or facilities. They also involve very little time.
3. Wear only light and minimum clothing to allow the skin to breathe and to absorb the sun's energy.
4. No 'warming up' or 'limbering' is necessary before practicing the Namaskars.
5. The 12 Positions follow one another with unbroken rhythm, like a dance. Go through each Position concentrating your mind on the breathing and movements.
6. Perform the exercises in a relaxed manner and enjoy every movement. Do not strain or use force. Avoid also jerks.
7. After completing the Namaskars, relax the body completely in Savasana (Relaxation Posture).
8. If you perspire after performing the Namaskars, rub the body with a wet towel. You may bathe after 15 minutes.
9. When you start the Namaskars for the first time, you may experience slight aches and pains in the muscles and joints. You should put up with these minor discomforts as they would pass off as your muscles and joints loosen up and elasticity is gained.
10. Whenever you feel pain in the back or any other part of the body while making the movements, return slowly to the starting Position, relax, and begin the Namaskars again the next day.
11. Persons suffering from heart ailments or blood pressure must not practice Surya Namaskars until they are completely cured.

13 BREATHING

1. During each Namaskar of 12 Positions, six complete inhalations and exhalations are made. There is no retention of the breath at any stage except in Positions 2 and 11 for about five seconds each. Hold out the breath while maintaining Position 6.

2. In this exercise, each movement is initiated by either an inhalation or an exhalation.

3. Beginners should do free breathing throughout as they will find regulated breathing difficult. They should co-ordinate movements and breath only after mastering the movements.

4. After mastering the mechanics of the practice, match the rhythm of breathing with the rhythm of movement and be completely aware of your breath and movements to get maximum results.

5. After continuous practice, breathing will adjust itself naturally and you will develop a rhythm of your own, co-ordinating the speed of each movement with the length of your inhalation and exhalation. Thus, you will never get out of breath.

14 SEQUENCE

- As you start practicing this exercise, learn the sequence of the movements.
- You may initially experience some difficulty in co-ordination, but once the movements synchronised with breathing are committed to memory, the practice becomes easy.
- The breathing cycle will be easy to remember if you bear in mind that you should exhale as you bend forward and inhale as you bend back.

You may paste an illustrated chart on a cardboard and hang it on a wall at eye level until you know the sequence by heart. The following Table also will help you to memorize the Positions and breaths in a Surya Namaskar cycle:

1. Stand upright and exhale fully,
2. Inhaling, stretch arms vertically above head and hold the breath. (Breath No.1). Bend back, holding the breath.
3. Double over (exhale).
4. Left leg back (inhale: Breath No.2).
5. Right leg back (exhale).
6. Body flat on the floor. (Inhale, Breath No.3, and then exhale while lowering the body and hold out the breath while maintaining the Position).
7. Head and trunk raised on arms (inhale: Breath No. 4).
8. Inverted 'V' (exhale).
9. Left foot brought forward (inhale: Breath No. 5).
10. Right foot brought forward and double over (exhale).
11. Inhaling, stretch arms vertically above head and hold the breath. (Breath No.6). Bend back, holding the breath.
12. Stand upright (exhale).

Positions 1 and 12, 2 and 11, 3 and 10 are the same.

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2
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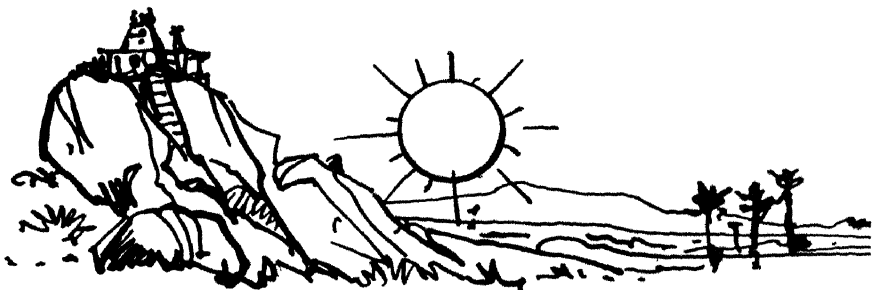
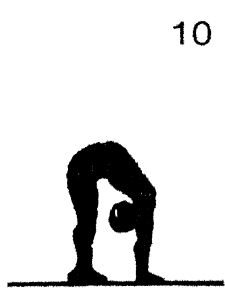
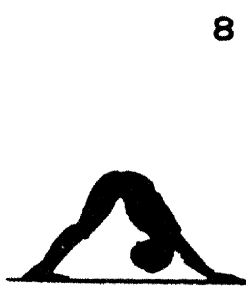
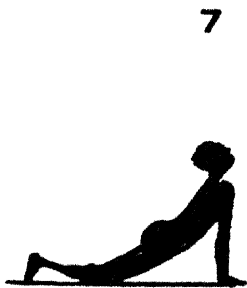
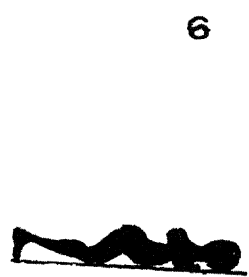
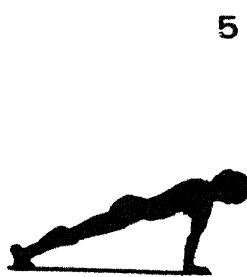
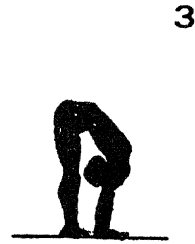
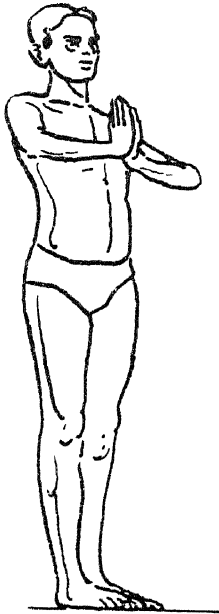
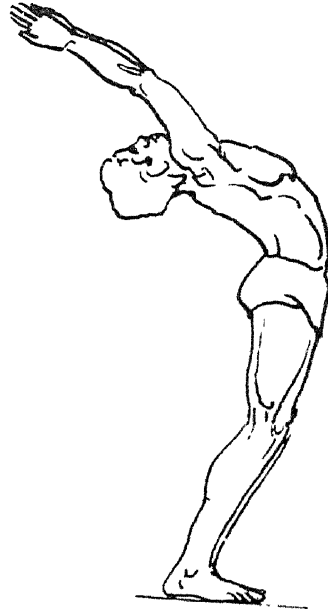
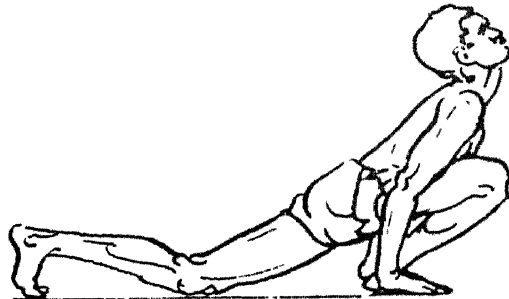
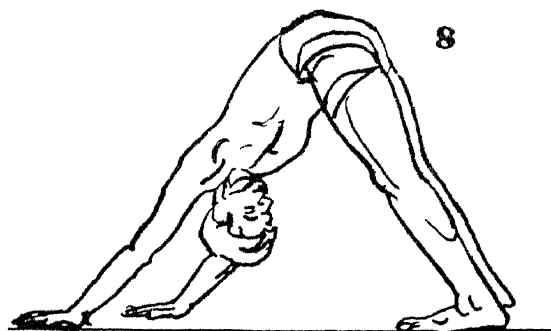
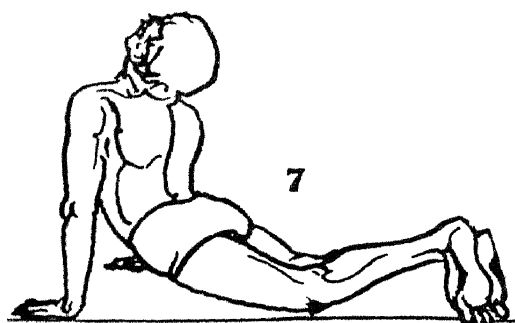
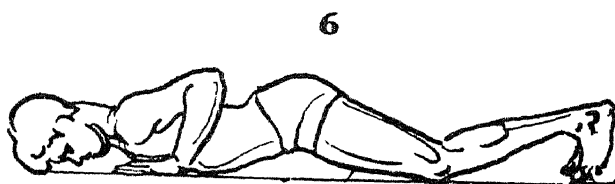
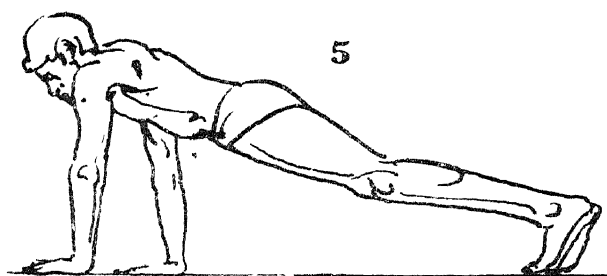
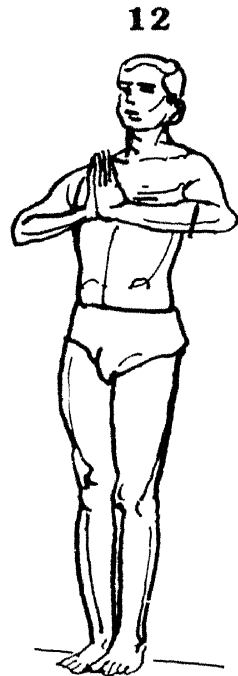
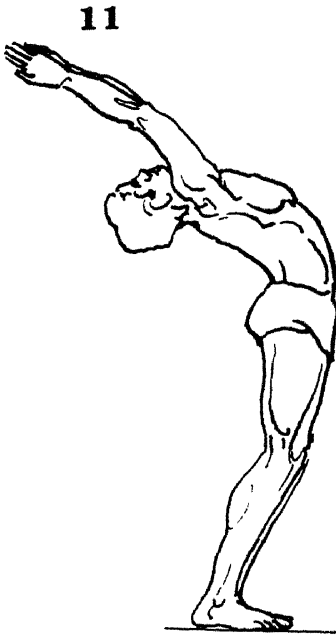
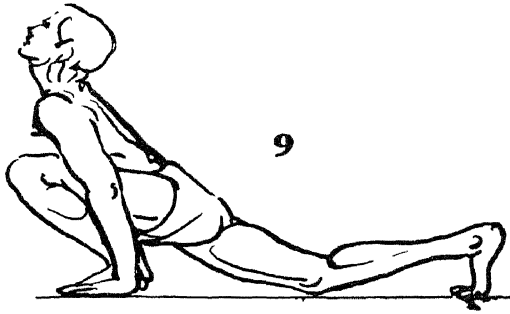

15 MANTRAS

1. *Mantra* is a sacred sound. The vibration of the sound has the effect of calming the mind even when the meaning is not understood.

2. Many different *Mantras* have been incorporated into Surya Namaskar by the ancient sages of India. You may, if you like, include the chanting of one of them before commencing each Namaskar.

3. Each of the 12 Positions given in this book has its own *Mantra*, extolling a different aspect of the Sun's divinity.

4. The traditional way of performing Surya Namaskar is to recite one of the *Mantras* facing the rising sun and then do a full salutation, touching the ground with eight parts of the body *(Sashtanga Namaskar)*.

5. The following 12 *Mantras*, which represent the names of the Sun, have been chanted in India for countless centuries while practising the Namaskars.

6. Each *Mantra* is recited either loudly or mentally before starting each Namaskar, preceded by the sacred syllable 'OM'.

7. It is recited in the standing position with the palms joined together touching the middle of the chest in a prayer gesture (Position 1).

8. The 12 *Mantras* are thus chanted in their respective order in conjunction with the 12 movements of the Surya Namaskar exercise.

POSITION 1

ओं मित्राय नमः ॥

Om Mitraya Namah.

Salutations to the Friend of All, endlessly giving light, heat and energy to sustain the earth and all other planets.

POSITION 2

ओं रवये नम: ॥

Om Ravaye Namah.

Salutations to the Shining One.

POSITION 3

ओं सूर्याय नम. ॥

Om Suryaya Namah.

Salutations to Him who Induces Activity.

POSITION 4

ओं भानवे नम· ॥

Om Bhanave Namah.

Salutations to Him who Ilumins.

POSITION 5

ओं खगाय नम. ॥

Om Khagaya Namah.

Salutations to Him who Moves Through Space Daily and Forms the Basis of Our Measurement of Time.

POSITION 6

ओं पूष्णे नम: ॥

Om Pushne Namah.

Salutations to the Nourisher of the World after its creation, including plants and human beings. Sun is the source of all strengh—mental, physical and spiritual.

POSITION 7

ओ हिरण्यगर्भाय नम ॥

Om Hiranya Garbhaya Namah.

Salutations to Him who Possesses Power to Develop Energy and Vitality.

POSITION 8

ओं मरीचये नमः ॥

Om Marichaye Namah.

Salutations to the Rays of the Sun.

POSITION 9

ओ आदित्याय नमः ॥

Om Adityaya Namah.

Salutations to the Eternal Celestial Light.

POSITION 10

ओं सवित्रे नम· ॥

Om Savitre Namah.

Salutations to the Vivifying Power of the Sun.

POSITION 11

ओ अर्काय नमः ॥

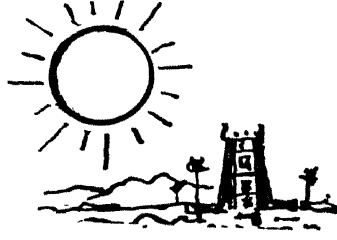
Om Arkaya Namah.

Salutations to Him who is Fit to be Revered.

POSITION 12

ओं भास्कराय नमः ॥

Om Bhaskaraya Namah.

Salutations to Him who Leads to Enlightenment.

ओं भूर्भुवस्स्वः । तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यम् ।
भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि । धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ॥

This *Gayatri Mantra,* chanted at dawn and dusk. invokes the Sun to confer His splendour on the worshipper. This *Mantra* is chanted by thousands of devout Hindus every day from *Rig Vedic* to modern times and is a positive proof of the continuity of Sun-worship.

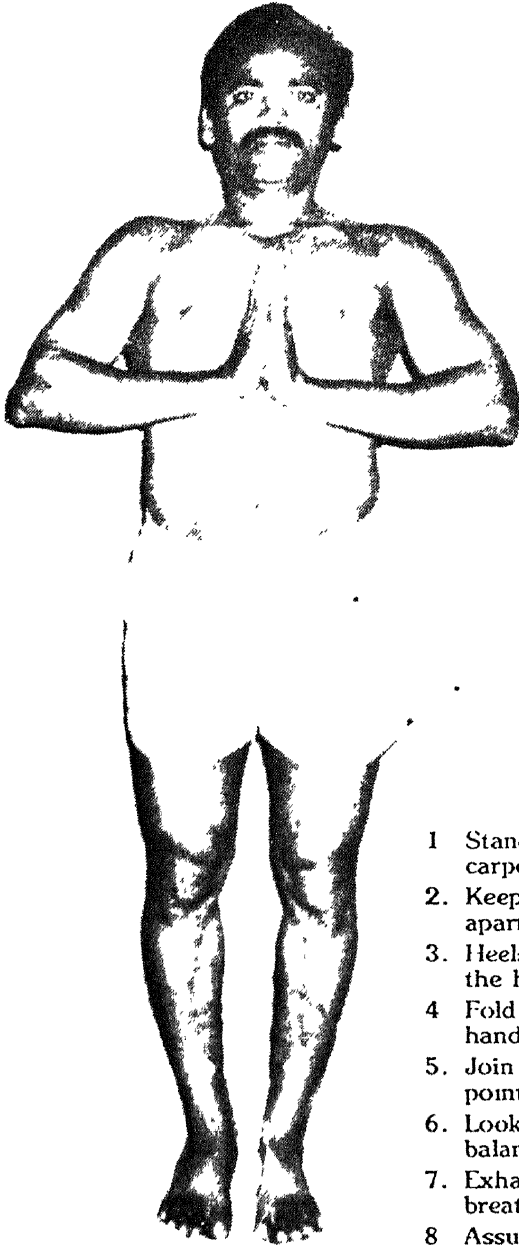
ध्येयः सदा सवितृमण्डलमध्यवर्ती ।
(Worship the Divinity within the Sun).
-- *Sandhya Vandanam*

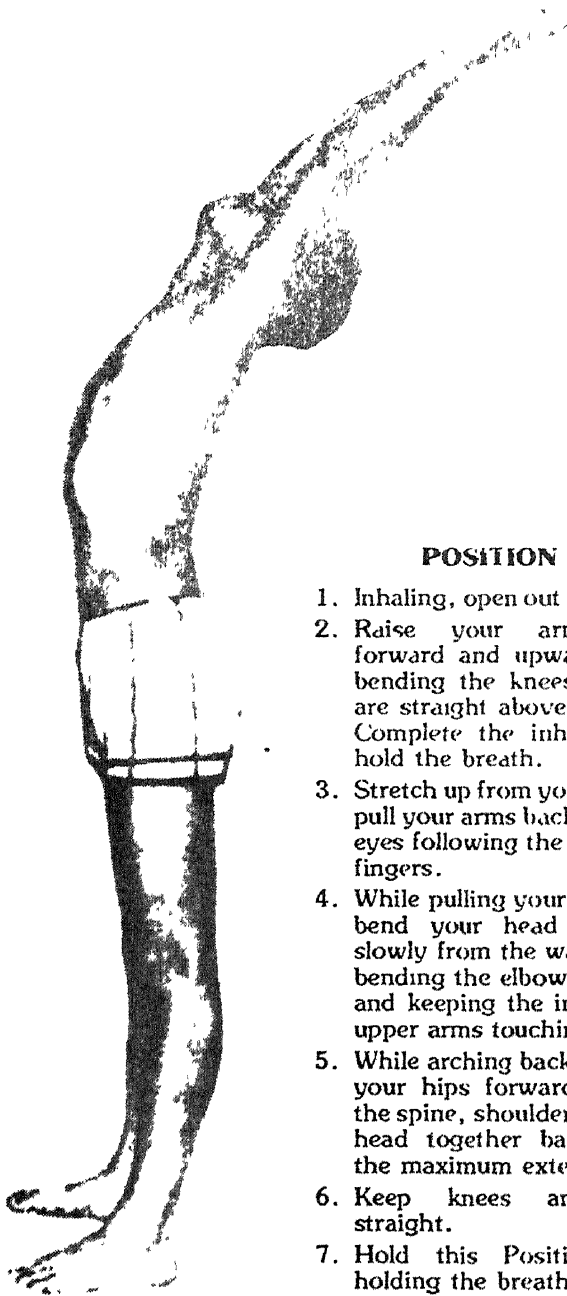
प्राणः प्रजानामुदयत्येष सूर्यः ।
-- *Prasnopanishad I - 8.*

The Rising Sun bestows life for all people.

उद्यन्नद्य मित्रमह आरोहन्नुत्तरां दिवम्
हृद्रोगं मम सूर्य हरिमाणं च नाशय ॥
-- *Krishna Yajur Veda*

Oh Sun! possessing a light which is beneficent to the whole world! Rising and ascending the high Heaven, please destroy my inner afflictions, as also those of my external body. (RV. I 50.11)

असावादित्यो ब्रह्मेति ।
- The Sun is Brahman itself.
-- *Taittiriya Aranyaka II. II2*

POSITION 1.

1 Stand erect on the mat or carpet at the centre.
2. Keep the feet about ten inches apart.
3. Heels, back and the back of the head should be in a line.
4 Fold the arms and bring the hands before the chest.
5. Join the palms with fingers pointing upwards.
6. Look straight and stand well balanced.
7. Exhale and take a few normal breaths.
8 Assume a prayerful mood

POSITION 2.

1. Inhaling, open out your hands.
2. Raise your arms slowly forward and upward without bending the knees until they are straight above your head Complete the inhalation and hold the breath.
3. Stretch up from your waist and pull your arms backward, your eyes following the tips of your fingers.
4. While pulling your arms back, bend your head and trunk slowly from the waist without bending the elbows and knees and keeping the inside of the upper arms touching the ears.
5. While arching back thus, push your hips forward and bend the spine, shoulders, neck and head together backwards to the maximum extent.
6. Keep knees and elbows straight.
7. Hold this Position firmly, holding the breath.

POSITION 3.

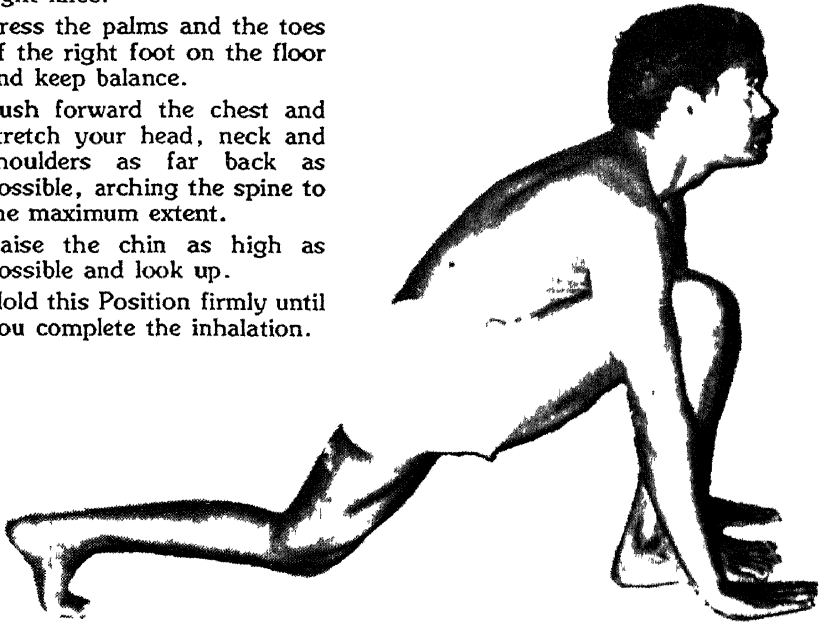
1. Exhaling, move your head and arms together forward and downward, keeping the head between the upper arms which should be touching the ears.
2. Bending the trunk forward from the waist, bring down your hands steadily to the floor, keeping the knees straight.
3. Place your palms flat on the floor at shoulder width and about five inches in front of your toes.
4. Push back the pelvis and press down on the floor with your palms.
5. Pull your head in towards the knees and try to touch them with your forehead.
6. Bring the chin towards the chest and touch it if possible.
7. Keep the knees straight and the heels pressing the ground.
8. Look towards your navel.
9. Hold this Position until you complete the exhalation.

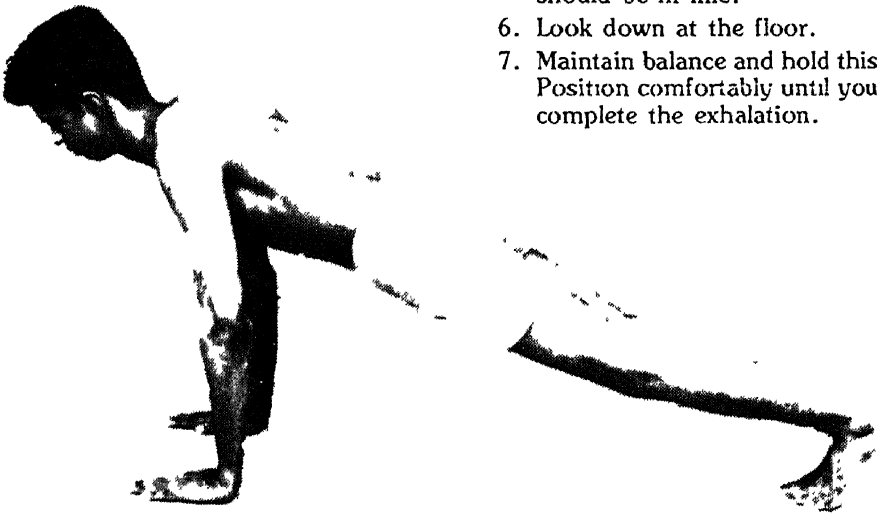
POSITION 4

1. Inhaling, press down hard on the hands
2. Lowering your hips down towards the floor, stretch the entire length of your left leg straight back, sliding your left foot backwards along the floor and rest it firmly on its toes.
3. While extending your left leg, raise your trunk and head.
4. Keep the knee of the extended left leg a little above the floor.
5. While extending the left leg backwards, bend forward the right knee.
6. Press the palms and the toes of the right foot on the floor and keep balance.

7. Push forward the chest and stretch your head, neck and shoulders as far back as possible, arching the spine to the maximum extent.

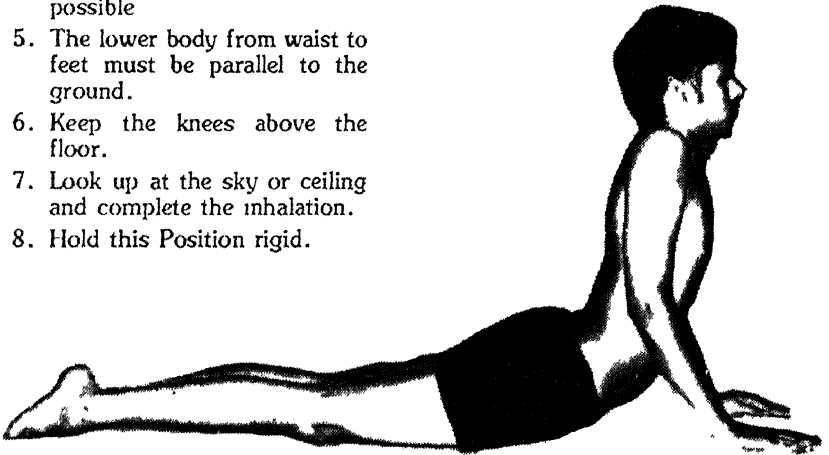
8. Raise the chin as high as possible and look up.

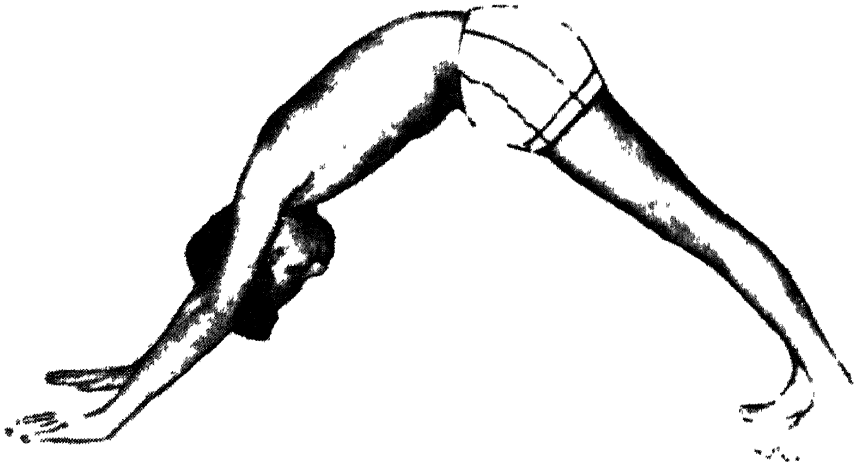
9. Hold this Position firmly until you complete the inhalation.

POSITION 5.

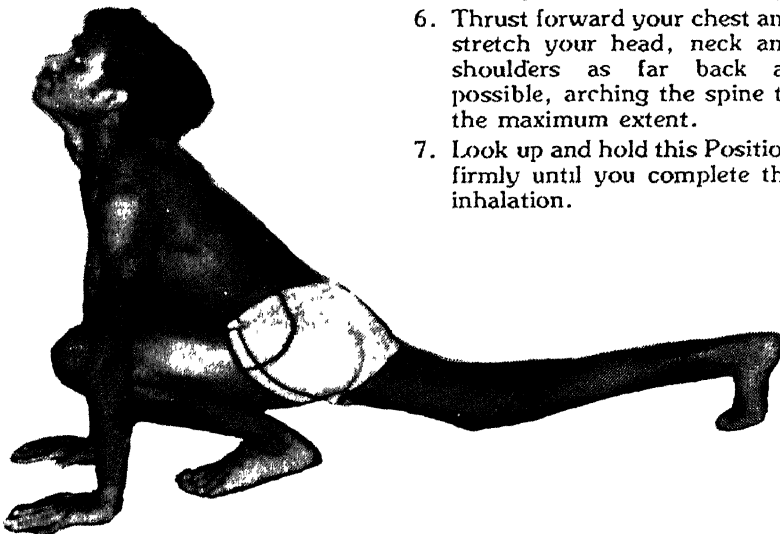
1 Start exhaling slowly.
2 Stretch the entire length of your bent right leg also straight back along the side of the stretched left leg by sliding your right foot back along the floor and rest it firmly on its toes.
3 Keep both legs straight and the knees above the floor.
4. Keep both feet perpendicular to the floor, with toes in alignment.
5. Head, trunk, thighs and legs should be in line.
6. Look down at the floor.
7. Maintain balance and hold this Position comfortably until you complete the exhalation.

POSITION 6.

1. Inhale slowly.
2. After completing the inhalation, exhale slowly.
3. While exhaling, lower your body slowly to the ground and assume the prone position as follows:
4. Bending the elbows and knees, bring down slowly your knees, upper abdomen and forehead on the ground one after the other and the chest last.
5. Keep your lower abdomen, pelvis and thighs as high as possible from the floor.
6. Complete the exhalation.
7. Holding out your breath, maintain this Position for a few seconds.

POSITION 7.

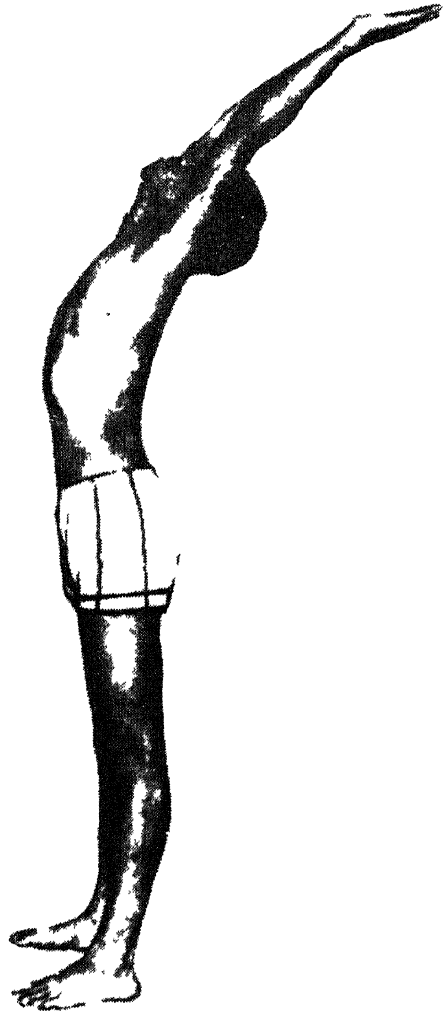
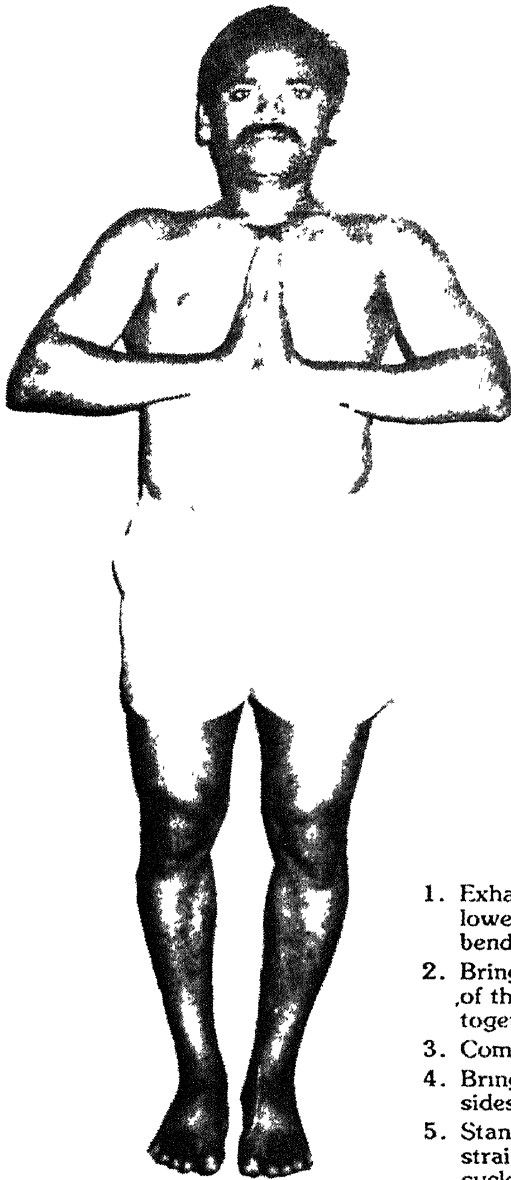
1. Lower the pelvis to the floor
2. Pushing forward the trunk, bend your head and neck backward, keeping your chest on the floor.
3. Inhaling and keeping the hips touching the ground, raise first your head and then the upper and lower parts of your trunk from the waist as high as possible, at the same time straightening the arms and legs fully.
4. Arch the spine as much as possible
5. The lower body from waist to feet must be parallel to the ground.
6. Keep the knees above the floor.
7. Look up at the sky or ceiling and complete the inhalation.
8. Hold this Position rigid.

POSITION 8.

1. Start exhaling slowly.
2. Pressing the hands and toes down on the floor and bending down your head, raise your knees slowly.
3. While raising them, swing the trunk backwards and lift your hips as high as possible without moving the toes and palms.
4 While doing so, slant your arms backwards and straighten out your legs, the toes only touching the ground.
5. Place your feet flat on the floor.
6. Arch back and bring your head down between the upper arms in an effort to rest the chin on the chest.
7. Look back at your navel and complete the exhalation.
8. Hold this Position motionless, holding out your breath.

POSITION 9.

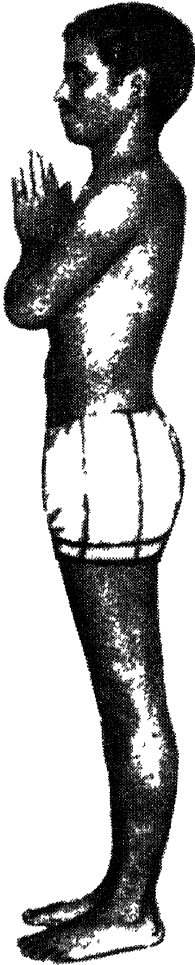
1. Inhaling slowly, bend the left *leg slightly and sliding forward* the left foot, place it flat on the floor about five inches behind the left arm which should be brought to a vertical position along with the right arm.
2. While the left foot is being slided forward, your trunk and buttocks will lower themselves of their own accord.
3. While the buttocks are nearing the floor, bend your right knee and lowering your right leg, rest its toes firmly on the floor
4. *Keep the knee of the extended* right leg a little above the floor.
5. Raise your trunk and head up.
6. Thrust forward your chest and stretch your head, neck and shoulders as far back as possible, arching the spine to the maximum extent.
7. Look up and hold this Position firmly until you complete the inhalation.

POSITION 10.

1. Exhaling, bend the right knee and slide forward the right foot up to the left foot into line with it and place its sole flat on the floor about five inches behind the vertical right arm.
2. While doing so, raise the hips high and, pressing down the palms on the floor, bend the head down and straighten up the legs.
3. Push up the pelvis and bend down from the waist.
4. Keep your palms and feet flat on the floor.
5. Keep the head between the upper arms.
6. Try to touch the knees with your forehead.
7. Look up towards your navel.
8. Hold this Position motionless until you complete the exhalation.

POSITION 11.

1. Inhaling, stretch your arms forward and bend your upper body backward slowly from the hips and come up to the standing position without bending the knees and elbows.
2. While rising up, keep the inside of the upper arms touching the ears and bring the arms straight above the head.
3. Turn the palms outwards.
4. Complete the inhalation and hold the breath.
5. Pull the arms backward and bend the body backward slowly from the waist without bending the elbows and knees and make an anterior arch of the spine.
6. Hold the head steadily between the upper arms and look back.
7. Maintain this Position firmly, holding the breath.

POSITION 12.

1. Exhaling, bend forward and lower the arms slowly, bending them at the elbows
2. Bring the hands in the middle ,of the chest and join the palms together.
3. Complete the exhalation.
4. Bring your arms down by your sides.
5. Stand upright and look straight, ready to start a new cycle.

16 THE 12 POSITIONS

Standing erect, keeping the feet a little apart. Palms are joined before the chest.

POSITION 1

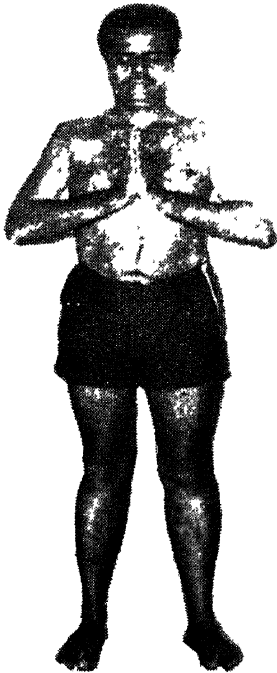
(a) Spread a blanket, mat or carpet on a level floor.

(b) Stand erect on it at the centre, facing the east.

(c) Keep the feet about ten inches apart and on a level with each other. Keep the arms straight down at the sides of the body. Knees should be held stiff. Heels, back, and the back of the head should be in a line. Keep the chest raised and the abdomen drawn in.

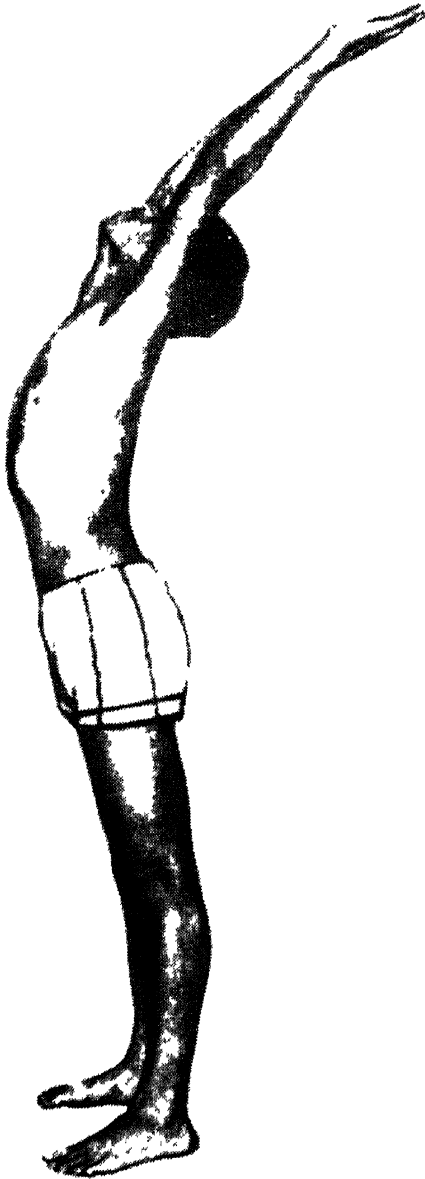
(d) Fold the arms and bring the hands inward before the chest . Both palms should be joined together tightly with the fingers well stretched out and pointing upwards. Turn the palms up with the finger-tips and thumbs touching each other and both thumbs touching the middle of the chest in a prayer gesture. The forearms from elbow to elbow should be in alignment. Keep the mouth closed and look straight. Keep both feet firmly planted on the floor and make sure your weight is evenly distributed. Stand well balanced. Exhale and take a few normal breaths. Relax the whole

body. This is the starting Position. (Fig. 1)

(e) Worship the rising Sun, if possible. Keep your mind calm and assume a prayerful mood.

Shri M.S. Viswanath, Yoga teacher and practitioner, starting Surya Namaskar.

POSITION 2.

(a) Breathe out slowly and completely and inhale deeply and slowly through the nose. (Breath No.1). While inhaling, open out your hands and, turning the palms outwards, raise your arms slowly forward and upward without bending the knees until they are straight above your head. The arms must be kept stiff during this upward movement, and not bent at the elbows. Keep the arms stiff, with the inside of the upper arms touching the ears. Keep your arms parallel in a straight line with the trunk and keep the distance of the shoulders between the hands. Complete the inhalation and hold the breath. Stand erect and stretch up as high as you can with your feet firmly planted on the ground.

(b) Without pausing and while holding the breath, stretch up from your waist and pull your arms backward in one smooth movement, your eyes following the tips of your fingers. While pulling your arms back, bend your head and trunk slowly from the waist as far back as balancing permits wi-

Arms are stretched above the head and the body is bent backwards.

thout bending the elbows and knees and keeping the inside of the upper arms touching the ears. While arching back from the waist, push your hips forward and bend the spine, shoulders, neck and head together backwards as far as you can without overbalancing, keeping the chin up and arching the neck and back. Knees and elbows should be kept straight and stiff. Hold your head steadily between the upper arms which should touch the ears. Push your chest forward and look back as far as possible. Having reached the limit of your capacity to bend backward, hold the position firmly without strain for about five seconds, holding the breath. (Fig. 2). Be aware of the curve of the lower back and feel the pull of the spine.

POINT

Knees and elbows should not be bent at any stage while executing this Position.

BENEFITS

1. The chest will expand and the capacity of the ribcage will increase while assuming this Position.

2. The arching of the back will exercise the shoulders, spine, ribs and the back muscles. While the front of the neck is stretched, its back is compressed.

3. The upward stretch gives traction to the spine, and the lumbar and sacral regions become more supple. It also tones the spinal nerves.

4. By leaning backward, the abdominal muscles are gently pulled and strengthened.

POSITION 3

Exhale slowly. While exhaling, straighten your lower back and start moving your head and arms together forward and downward slowly, keeping the head steadily between the upper arms which should be touching the ears. Bending the trunk forward from the waist and drawing in the abdomen, bring down your hands steadily to the floor, keeping the arms stretched out and the knees straight. Press the ground with the finger-tips first in the most comfortable position and then place your palms flat on the floor at shoulder width and about five inches in front of your toes.

Palms are placed flat on the floor at shoulder width and the body is doubled at the hips.

The palms should be parallel to each other with fingers close together and pointing forward. Pushing back the pelvis, press down on the floor with your palms. The body will now be doubled at the hips resembling an hair-pin, supported on your hands and feet. The weight of your body is now borne by your hands and feet. After bending down and placing the palms flat on the floor, draw in your abdomen and pull your head in towards the knees and try to touch them with your forehead, avoiding strain at the back of the thighs. Bring the chin towards the chest and touch it if possible. Keep the knees straight and the heels pressing the ground. Look towards your navel. Hold this Position motionless until you complete the exhalation. (Fig. 3)

POINTS

1. In the beginning, your hands will not reach much below your ankles, but go down as far as you can, curving your back and relaxing your back muscles in order to reach further down. As your fingers come closer and closer to the ground with persistent practice, first, allow the finger-tips to come as near the floor as could be managed and finally touch it without strain. After repeated practice, place your palms flat on the floor just opposite to and as near as possible to the respective toes with fingers close together and pointing forward and keeping your knees and elbows straight. You may bring your hands closer to the feet little by little as you progress in the practice.

2. Persons who are fat, too tall, old or lead a sedentary life will not be able to place their palms flat on the floor. They must not strain.

3. In the initial stages, you may bend your knees slightly, but regular practice extending over many weeks will enable you to place your palms flat on the floor without bending your knees, otherwise you will tilt to one side.

4. After placing the palms flat on the floor, adjust the distance between them and their distance from the toes according to the build of your body. As you continue the practice, try to place the palms as near your big toes as possible and at shoulder width.

5. Advanced students may keep their feet together with toes touching each other. They may then place their palms flat on the floor, with fingers pointing forward, on either side of the feet, next to the little toes. The tips of the fingers and toes should be in a line. To attain this Position, you may have to bend down a little more.

6. From now on, the palms should remain flat on the floor in the same position until moving out of Position 10.

7. The forehead should be as close to the knees as possible. Advanced students may touch the knees with the forehead, keeping the legs straight.

8. Increase the backward and forward stretches gradually.

9. The strain which may be felt in the calves, the backs of the thighs, waist, hips and spine by beginners will fade away with regular practice.

10. This Position is the counterpose of Position 2 and resembles Padahastasana.

BENEFITS

1. In this Position, the spine is stretched to the utmost.

2. As the trunk folds against the legs, the posterior muscles of the body receive a good stretch.

3. The muscles of the neck, back, the sides, the back of the thighs and calves are brought into play and strengthened. The muscles of the abdomen are greatly contracted by the extreme forward bending of the body. The hamstring muscles at the back of the thighs are stretched. The hips and waist are also well exercised.

4. By bending down the head and pulling it towards the knees, the brain receives extra blood supply and the facial tissues are nourished. The pituitary, pineal, thyroid and parathyroid glands also get a rich flow of blood towards them.

5. The sacral and lower lumbar regions of the spine become more supple by assuming this Position. Pushing back the pelvis eases the fifth lumbar vertebra.

6. Surplus fat in the abdomen and waist will get reduced.

POSITION 4

Keep the right foot and palms firmly planted on the floor. Inhale deeply (Breath No.2). While inhaling, slightly bend both legs at the knees and, without bending the arms or shifting the position of the palms on the ground, press down hard on the hands. Lowering your hips down towards the floor, stretch the entire length of your left leg straight back, sliding your left foot backwards along the floor as far as it will go and rest it firmly on its toes. While extending your left leg, raise your trunk and head. Keep the left foot fixed perpendicularly on the floor. The thigh and foot of the extended left leg must be in line with the vertical left arm. Keep the knee of the extended left leg a little above the floor. While extending the left leg

Left leg is stretched back. The right leg is bent and its foot is kept flat on the floor. Head and neck are stretched back.

backwards, bend forward the right knee, keeping the toes of the right foot and both hands in the same position firmly on the floor. The right knee, which is now flexed under your chest, should project a little ahead of the straightened right arm. The right side of the right thigh should touch the vertical right arm. Press the palms and the toes of the right foot on the floor and keep balance. Keep the arms vertical and in the same position. Push forward the chest and stretch your head, neck and shoulders as far back as possible, arching the spine to the maximum extent from the waist region to the neck. Raise the chin as high as possible and look up. Support the weight of the body on both hands, the right foot and the toes of the left foot which should be bent to grip the floor. Hold this position firmly until you complete the inhalation.

POINT

Keep the knee of the extended left leg a little above the floor. Beginners, however, may rest the knee on the floor for support.

BENEFITS

1. In this Position, the spine and neck are stretched in the opposite direction to Position 3.

2. The hips, shoulders, arms and thighs are also exercised.

POSITION 5

Start exhaling slowly. Without bending the arms or changing the position of the palms and the left foot on the ground, stretch the entire length of your bent right leg also straight back along the side of the stretched left leg by sliding your right foot back along the floor and rest it firmly on its toes. Keep both legs straight and the knees above the floor. Keep both feet perpendicular to the floor, with the toes in alignment. The thigh and foot of the extended right leg also must be in line with the vertical right arm. Press the palms and toes on the floor. The whole body is now lifted from the floor and kept straight as an inclined plane from shoulders to heels and its entire weight is borne by the hands and toes. The head, trunk, thighs and legs

should be in line, propped up on the vertical arms and feet and sloping from the shoulders to the heels. Look down at the floor. Maintain balance and hold this Position comfortably and motionless until you complete the exhalation. (Fig 5).

Right leg also is stretched back. Head, trunk, thighs and legs are in a line

POINTS

1. Once the feet are placed correctly on the floor in this Position, they should remain at this point until moving out of Position 8.

2. Do not allow the elbows to turn out.

BENEFITS

This Position provides good exercise to the fingers, wrists, arms, shoulders, back, legs, ankles, feet and toes and improves the posture. It is also beneficial to the abdominal muscles.

POSITION 6

Keep the hands and toes firmly on the ground in the same positions and keep the whole body motionless. Inhale slowly and deeply. (Breath No.3). After completing the inhalation, exhale slowly and while exhaling, lower your body very slowly to the ground and assume the prone position as follows:

Bending the elbows and knees, bring down very slowly your knees, upper abdomen and forehead on the ground one after the other and the chest last. Place the forehead at the farthest point on the floor. Tuck your tailbone up and keep your lower abdomen, pelvis and thighs

as high as possible from the floor. The palms should remain in the same position alongside the chest. The arms should be kept close to your sides. The feet should not be moved and are held almost perpendicular, the toes only touching the ground and curled under. Complete the exhalation while drawing in the abdomen. Holding out your breath, maintain this Position for a few seconds allowing your muscles to slacken. You have now come half way in the practice of Surya Namaskar. (Fig 6).

POINTS

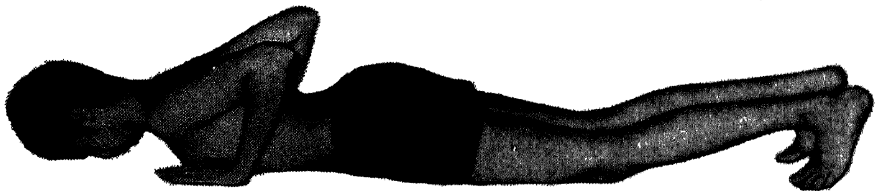
1. While assuming this Position, apply pressure on the forearms and balance the body on the toes and palms which should not be moved from their positions.

2. Hold the body rigid while lowering it slowly.

3. In this Position, the body lies prostrate on the ground, with the abdomen drawn in and the hips raised off the floor. The lower abdomen must be kept slightly raised from the floor. The palms lie flat on the floor by the side of the chest.

4. In this Position, eight parts of the body come in contact with the floor, namely, the two sets of toes, the two knees, the two palms, chest and forehead. *(Sashtanga Namaskar)*. Other parts of the body, including nose, should not touch the ground.

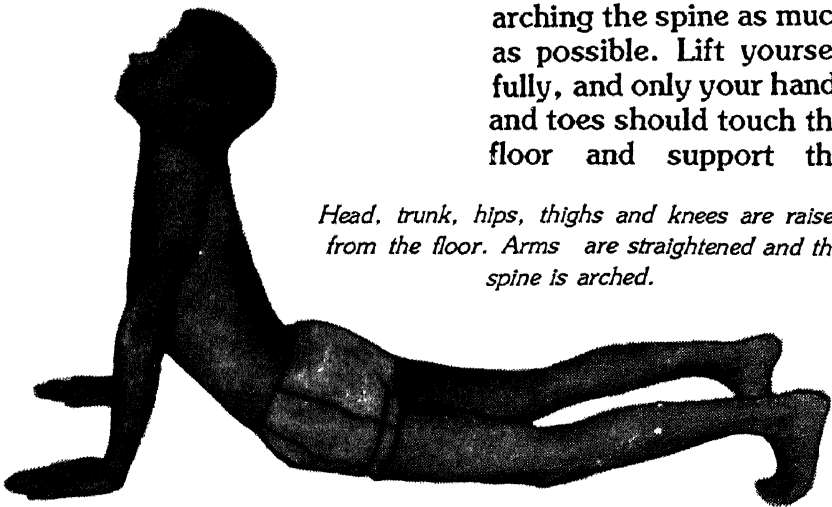
5. Fat persons will find keeping this Position difficult as their abdomen will sag, but they may draw in the abdomen and try to keep their hips and lower abdomen as far above the floor as possible.

The body is lowered to the ground.

BENEFITS

The whole body is exercised while you assume this Position. The muscles of the neck, shoulders, the upper arms, forearms, back and abdomen are brought into play. The wrist-joints as also the joints of the legs and arms are strengthened.

POSITION 7

Keep the toes, knees and palms firmly in the same position and lower the pelvis again to the floor. Pushing forward the trunk, bend your head and neck backward, keeping your chest on the floor. Inhale slowly and deeply. (Breath No. 4). While inhaling, press the palms and toes down on the floor and, keeping the hips touching the ground, raise first your head and then the upper and lower parts of your trunk from the waist smoothly and as high as possible, at the same time straightening the arms and legs fully. The straightened and vertical arms will prop your trunk up from the floor. While stretching up the trunk and head, the position of the feet and palms must not be changed. Keeping your elbows stiff, push your chest forward and bend your head, neck and shoulders backward to the fullest extent, arching the spine as much as possible. Lift yourself fully, and only your hands and toes should touch the floor and support the

Head, trunk, hips, thighs and knees are raised from the floor. Arms are straightened and the spine is arched.

body. Keep both feet perpendicular to the floor. The lower body from waist to feet must be parallel to the ground. Keep the knees above the floor so that the legs do not touch the ground. Look up at the sky or ceiling. Complete the inhalation and hold this Position rigid. Concentrate your mind on the base of the spine and feel the tension from the backward pull.

BENEFITS

1. In this Position, the spine is bent backwards to its fullest extent which makes the lumbar region more flexible. Minor deformities of the spine and slipped discs are also corrected.

2. The muscles in the front of the neck are stretched to capacity while those in the nape are compressed.

3. In this Position, the weight of the upper part of the body is borne mostly by the triceps muscles of the arms which become strong and supple. Flabby upper arms will be corrected. The shoulders and wrists also become strong.

4. The pectoral muscles of the chest are expanded and developed. The lower back muscles are also compressed but not tensed in the final position.

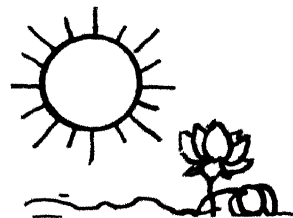
5. A bulging belly will get reduced by this practice as the abdominal muscles are streched.

6. The kidneys are gently massaged.

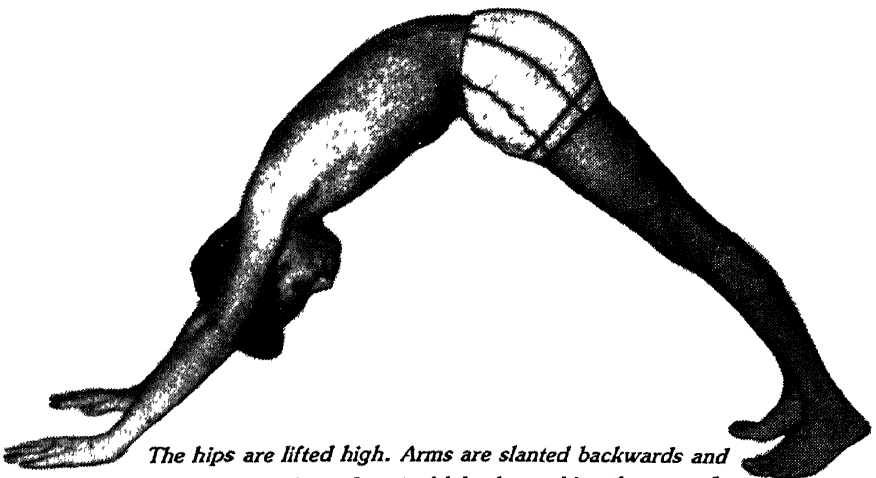
7. It will keep the waist firm and supple.

NOTE

1. This Position is the counterpose of Position 3.

2. It resembles Bhujangasana with the difference that here the elbows are kept straight and the knees, thighs and pelvis are raised slightly from the floor.

POSITION 8

Keep the arms and legs straight and the hands and toes firmly on the floor in the same positions. Start exhaling slowly. Pressing the hands and toes down on the floor and bending down your head, raise your knees slowly and while raising them, swing the trunk backwards and lift your hips as high as possible without moving the toes and palms. While doing so, slant your arms backwards, pivoting from the shoulders, and straighten out your legs, the toes only touching the floor and pointing in. Pushing your hips further backwards and stretching the hamstrings, gradually place your feet flat on the floor with both heels pressing the floor without strain. Arch back and bring your head down between the upper arms in an effort to rest the chin on the chest. Keep the knees and elbows as rigid as possible. The abdomen must be drawn in. The legs and arms should be completely stretched and keep them straight. Raise your hips and look back at your navel. Complete the exhalation.

In this Position, the whole body is raised and bent at the waist and a high backward arch is done. The legs, trunk and arms resemble an inverted 'V' and the whole body forms a triangle with the floor. The entire weight of the body is supported on the hands and feet. Hold this

The hips are lifted high. Arms are slanted backwards and legs are straightened out with heels touching the ground.

Position motionless for a few seconds, holding out your breath.

POINTS

1. Though various parts of the body are moved to attain this Position, all the movements should be synchronized.

2. This Position is the counterpose of Position 7 as the spine is bent in the opposite direction.

3. You will find that as the hips rise the head goes down automatically.

4. Beginners may feel some strain in the arms, ankles, calves, thighs, the heel tendons (Achilles) and the muscles and ligaments behind the knees, but this will wear off with regular practice.

5. Beginners may find it difficult to get their heels right down on the floor due to the strain on the backs of the legs, but it becomes possible after some practice as the hamstring muscles loosen up.

6. Your legs may tend to slide away at first, but this could be avoided by planting your heels firmly on to the ground after some practice.

BENEFITS

1. While assuming this Position, the wrists, forearms, upper arms, shoulders, the back of the neck, upper back, the back of the legs, hips, hamstrings, knees, calves, ankles and feet are limberedup.

2. The legs are stretched in different positions and their muscles, joints, tendons and ligaments will be strengthened.

3. It relieves the pressure on the main veins in the legs and thus counteracts sciatica and varicose veins.

4. The sacral area of the spine becomes more supple.

5. This Position boosts blood supply to the brain, scalp, face, heart and the internal organs.

6. It improves breathing as it opens the chest. It will also promote abdominal breathing.

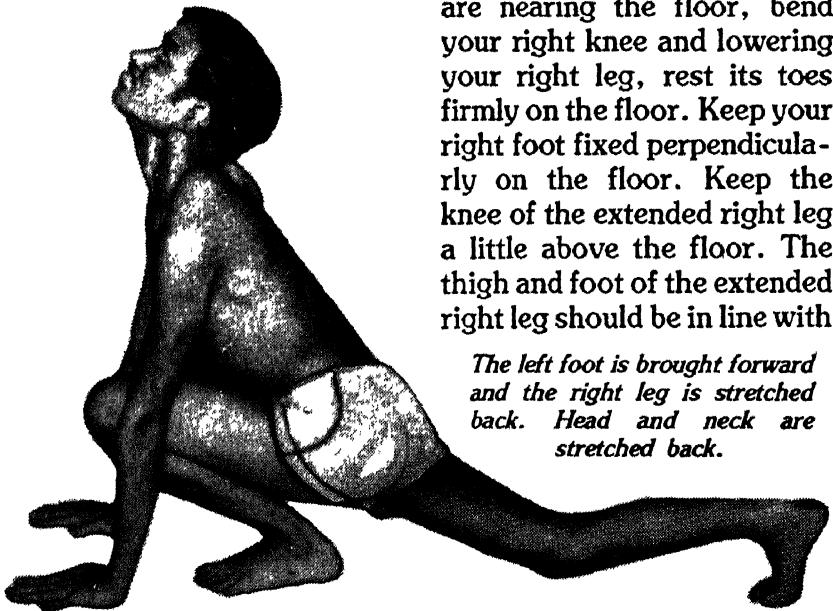
7. It helps to relieve flatulence and digestive disorders.

8. It reduces tension in almost every part of the body.

POSITION 9

The return to the starting Position begins with this Position. Here, Position 4 is repeated backwards.

Inhale deeply (Breath No.5). Without bending the elbows or changing the position of the palms on the ground, bend the left leg slightly at the knee and sliding forward the left foot, place it flat on the floor about five inches behind the left arm which should be brought to a vertical position again along with the right arm. The left thigh should be kept very near the raised trunk and the bent left knee should project a little ahead of the vertical left arm. The left side of the left thigh should touch the vertical left arm. While the left foot is being slided forward, your trunk and buttocks will lower themselves of their own accord. While the buttocks are nearing the floor, bend your right knee and lowering your right leg, rest its toes firmly on the floor. Keep your right foot fixed perpendicularly on the floor. Keep the knee of the extended right leg a little above the floor. The thigh and foot of the extended right leg should be in line with

The left foot is brought forward and the right leg is stretched back. Head and neck are stretched back.

the vertical right arm. Keep the palms and the toes of the left foot firmly on the floor. Raise your trunk and head up. Thrust forward your chest and stretch your head, neck and shoulders as far back as possible, arching the spine to the maximum extent. Raise the chin as high as possible and look up. Support the weight of the body on both hands, the right foot and the toes of the left foot. Hold this Position firmly until you complete the inhalation. (Fig. 9).

The right foot is brought forward. The hips are raised and legs are straightened up.

POSITION 10

Return to Position 3 as follows: Exhale slowly and while exhaling, fix the palms firmly on the floor. Bending the right knee, slide forward the right foot up to the left foot into line with it and place its sole flat on the floor about five inches behind the vertical right arm. While doing so, raise the hips high and, pressing down the palms on the floor, bend the head down and straighten up the legs slowly without altering the positions of the palms and the left foot on the floor. Push up the pelvis and bend down from the waist. Keep your palms and feet flat on the floor. The distance between your hands and feet should be the same as in Position 3. Keep the arms vertical and the knees rigid. Keep the head between the upper arms. Draw in your abdomen and try to touch the knees with your forehead, avoiding

The body is raised into the standing position. Arms are stretched above the head and the body is bent backwards.

strain at the back of the thighs. Keep the legs straight and look up towards your navel. Hold this Position motionless until you complete the exhalation. (Fig. 10)

POINT

The feet and palms should be placed flat on the floor in the same places as in Position 3.

BENEFIT

The muscles at the front of the thighs are strengthened and the spine becomes flexible by assuming this Position.

POSITION 11

Resume Position 2 as follows: Inhale slowly and deeply (Breath No. 6). While inhaling, stretch your arms forward and bend the upper body backward slowly from the hips and come up to the standing position without bending the knees and elbows. While rising up, keep the inside of the upper arms touching the ears and bring the arms straight above the head.

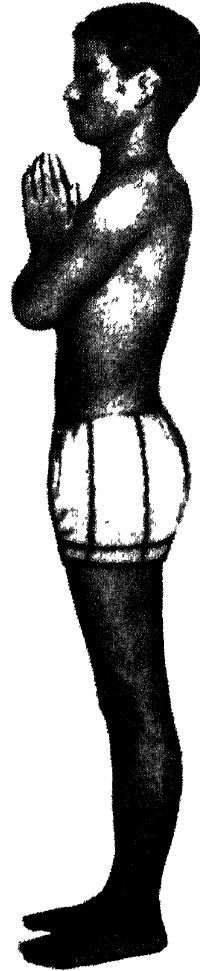
Turn the palms outwards with the fingers pointing upwards. Complete the inhalation and hold the breath. Without any pause, pull the arms backward and bend the body back again slowly from the waist without bending the elbows and knees and, pushing the abdomen and pelvis forward, make an anterior arch of the spine as before. Hold the head steadily between the upper arms and look back. Maintain this Position firmly without strain for about five seconds, holding the breath.

POSITION 12.

Finally, resume the First Position as follows: Exhale slowly and while exhaling, bend forward and lower the arms slowly, bending them at the elbows. Bring the hands in the middle of the chest and join the palms together in a prayer gesture as you started. Complete the exhalation.

Bring your arms down by your sides. Stand upright at ease and look straight, ready to start a new cycle.

This completes one round of Surya Namaskar.

Relax for a few seconds and recover the breath before starting the next round from the same Position.

Arms are lowered and palms are joined in the middle of the chest.

Relax completely in Savasana after completing all the rounds.

NOTE

While assuming Positions 3 and 10, advanced students may keep their heels and toes together and place their palms flat on the floor on either side of the feet. The rest of the practice is the same.

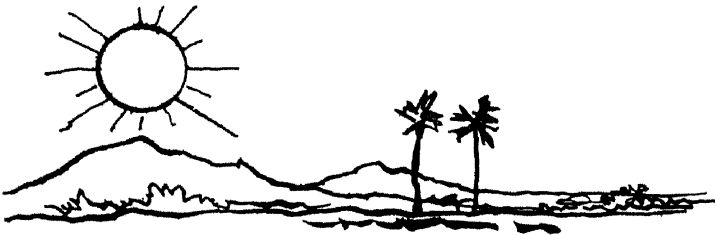
EIGHT-FOLD SALUTATION
(Sashtanga Namaskar)

उरसा शिरसा दृष्ट्या वचसा मनसा तथा।
पद्भ्यां कराभ्यां जानुभ्यां प्रणामोऽष्टांग उच्यते॥

-- *Mahanyasam.*

17 BENEFITS OF SURYA NAMASKAR

1. The age-old practice of Surya Namaskar was designed by sages on a scientific basis to bring about a harmonious development of the body and mind by giving proper exercise to every part of the body and keeping the mind alert. It is the best system of physico-spiritual culture the world has ever known and no other system can surpass it.
2. Surya Namaskar combines a whole series of exercises into one grand exercise which brings several life-long benefits.
3. Each Namaskar consists of a sequence of 12 simple postures grouped together as a harmonious blend of exercise and breathing. Each posture counteracts the one before, stretching the body in a different way. It is thus the best all-round exercise for the body.
4. Surya Namaskar is one of the best overall body conditioners. The entire body is exercised and revitalized by 12 graceful and well-balanced movements.
5. It tones and limbers the limbs and organs of the body in one complete set of movements. The limbs of the body become symmetrical by regular practice. The body will also become light.
6. The muscles of the neck, shoulders, arms, thighs, legs, hips and abdomen become firm with regular practice. Eye muscles also are brought into play and eye-lustre improves.
7. Stiff joints get loosened. The wrists are particularly benefited since the weight of the body falls mostly on them while the Positions are changed from 3 to 10.
8. The movements stimulate the circulation and help to distribute the blood to all the organs of the body. They provide an excellent warm-up for the entire body.

9. All the nerve plexes are benefited and thus the entire nervous system. Brain function also improves.
10. The performance of Namaskars will harmonize the endocrine system.
11. Lung capacity increases by the deep and regulated breathing. Heart action also improves without strain.
12. Surya Namaskar stretches the spine forwards and backwards alternately and makes it supple. It also relieves aches and pains in the spinal area.
13. Deviations of the spinal curve are corrected and good posture ensured.
14. Surya Namaskar stretches and contracts the abdomen and relieves congestion of the abdominal viscera. The organs of the abdomen receive a good massage and function more efficienty.
15. It reduces excess fat in the abdomen, waist, hips, thighs and other parts of the body. Blood cholesterol levels will also decline.
16. Bowels will function properly as peristalsis is stimulated.
17. Several ailments and disorders such as indigestion, constipation, backache, etc. could be cured or prevented by the regular performance of Namaskars.
18. It will remove psychosomatic tensions and calm the mind.
19. The performance of Namaskars increases the power of concentration and develops an attitude of reverence and devotion to the Suprme.

18 A CELESTIAL HEALER

आरोग्यं भास्करात् इच्छेत्।

(Sun Is the Bestower of Health)

Sun is the most powerful healing agent known to man. The curative powers of the sun's rays have been well known to physicians from ancient times. Heliotherapy, also known as 'Light Therapy', has been practiced over the ages.

Since time immemorial, the devout among the Hindus used to invoke the Sun's blessings to prevent or cure heart ailments.

The *Rig* and *Yajur Vedas* have extolled the Sun as the healer of diseases. The *Rig Veda* states clearly that the Sun eradicates all diseases of the heart and skin. (I-50 10-11).

Krishna Yajur Veda - Taittiriya Brahmana - 21, states:

उद्यन्नद्यमित्रमह
आरोहन्नुत्तरां दिवम्।
हृद्रोगं मम सूर्य
हरिमाणं च नाशय ।।

(III *Ashtakam,* 7th *Prasnam*).

''Surya, remove my heart disease''

Sun is the Presiding Deity of the eye, proclaim some of the *Upanishads.*

The idea of effecting a cure of leprosy by the aid of the sun was not a new one in India at the time of the *Puranas.*

The *Skanda Purana* says: 'The Sun bestows health when worshipped with devotion. The body of the worshipper becomes strong and free from diseases by the favour of the Sun'.

A POWERFUL HEALING AGENT

Sunlight comprises heating elements, colour rays, ultra-violet rays, infrared rays and various other kinds of rays

hitherto unknown to science, and of all the healing agents it is considered best.

During the last two centuries, the therapeutic benefits of sunlight have come tō be understood scientifically. Even today, energy currents from the sun are being used for healing purposes in many ways.

Sunlight acts as the foremost catalyst in bringing about various chemical changes in living organisms.

Vitamin D is essential if the body is to be able to absorb the calcium it needs from food. When the sun's rays fall on the skin, the ultraviolet rays activate a pro-vitamin which already exists in it and vitamin D is formed in the body which is helpful in the treatment of malnutrition, anaemia, chlorosis, rheumatism, obesity, etc.

Sunlight is found useful even today in the treatment of cancer, eczema, pulmonary disorders, muscular atrophy, arthritis, etc.

Exposure of the body to sunlight will immensely help in correcting Osteomalacia, a disorder characterized by weakness of the bones.

Tubercular infections of bones, joints, internal organs and the skin respond well to sunlight. Some mental disorders also can be cured by the sun's rays.

Sunlight destroys bacteria in the atmosphere, in water and in the soil. It is a potent germicide and antiseptic. It acts as an aseptic and antiseptic treatment for wounds.

ULTRAVIOLET RAYS

The importance of the ultraviolet component of sunlight has been well realized by scientists. At the end of the 19th century, it was discovered that the effects of sunlight were not due so much to the visible rays or to the heat rays from the sun as to the cold ultra-violet rays of short wave-length.

Ultraviolet rays are invaluable for their healing effect in skin diseases. They are helpful in eradicating fungal infections of the skin and for treating chronic ulcers. The red heat rays are highly beneficial in the treatment of rheumatism and arthritis.

Children chronically under-exposed to adquatc .mounts of solar ultraviolet rays may develop rickets, a uef ›rming disease characterized by under-mineralization of the bones. The disease can be cured by exposure to natural or artificial sources of ultraviolet rays incorporating wavelengths of less than 315nm. To prevent and cure rickets in children it is a common practice in India even today to make the tiny tots bask in sunlight after rubbing their body with mustard oil.

CHROMOTHERAPY

Chromotherapy is the treatment of diseases by means of sunlight and colours. Scientific investigations in the domain of colours have confirmed that the chemical rays of the sun, when applied through different coloured glasses are able to cure many diseases.

This therapy has been used from ancient times and has developed and spread in many countries today. Ayurvedic medicine also has been employing this method effectively over the ages.

The colour therapist uses lights of specific colours for specific conditions. The appropriate wavelengths act on the body to charge energy systems in the concerned organs or tissues.

The apparatus a Chromopath needs for a colour-bath is very simple. It comprises a few pieces of glass of the required colours of the size 12' X 15'. The glass pieces are placed in the window-frame of the thermoleum in such a way that the sun's rays are captured and made to fall directly upon the patient. The duration of such a colour-bath is usually half an hour. In case of local application, a pane

of glass is placed in front of the diseased part so that the light passing through the glass falls on it.

Natural treatment of diseases by the sun's rays filtered through coloured glass is a very ancient system of therapy in India. The patient lies in a wooden box with glass panels on the lid. The sun's rays are allowed to penetrate through the glass panels. The colour of the glass is changed according to the patient's ailment.

CHROMO-HYDROPATHY

Chromo-hydropathy is another aspect of therapy used effectively to cure many common disorders. To capture the sun's rays, bottles of the required colour are cleaned and filled to three-fourth level with fresh well water, distilled water or rain water. The bottles are corked and placed in bright sunlight for three to four hours in an open space such as a roof top. The most appropriate time for exposing the water to sunlight is mid-day. The contents of the coloured bottles which are subjected to the rays of the sun from three to four hours are stated to acquire healing properties.

This colour-charged water can be used medicinally, externally or internally. For external application, wounds and ulcers can be washed with the colour-charged water. It can also be used to massage the affected parts or applied as a compress to them.

The healing properties of the colour-charged water can be used in the treatment of various ailments such as inflammatory skin diseases, nervous disorders, disorders of the respiratory and urinary organs, gout, rheumatism, etc.

There is great need to popularise Chromotherapy and Chromo-Hydropathy in India today. Pioneers in this field will find it quite rewarding.

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19 SUN BATH

1. Sun Bath is the exposure of the whole body to the direct light of the sun, and is practiced all over the world today with beneficial results.
2. In India, since ancient times, mothers used to strip their babes naked, and expose every part of their babies to the sun's rays.
3. The absence of ultra-violet rays, especially in the atmosphere of cities, is responsible for much ill health, and sun-bathing in suitable open-air places compensates for this.
4. The rays of the sun enter the body directly and are absorbed instantly. You do not have to pay anything for this treatment.
5. Sunbathing has been prescribed from early times by many physicians for such diverse conditions as epilepsy, jaundice and obesity.
6. Exposure of the body to sunlight improves the tonicity of the skin and enables it to resist the influence of the atmosphere. It helps the skin to eliminate toxic matter through perspiration.
7. Sunbath stimulates the nerves, improves circulation, and helps to cure inflammation of the internal organs.
8. Besides stimulating the blood vessels and glands of the skin, sunlight strengthens the underlying muscles.
9. Sunlight improves appetite and nutrition and helps to assimilate and metabolise food.
10. A wide range of wave energies are utilized in a direct sun bath, the ultraviolet and infrared being the most important therapeutically. The shorter waves stimulate various life processes and destroy harmful bacteria.
11. Sunbathing is beneficial for patients having skin diseases like eczema, psoriasis, etc.

12. Exposure of the chest and back to the rays of the warm sun is beneficial for asthmatics.
13. Sunbath promotes the development of bones.
14. It helps he formation of Vitamin D.

HOW TO DO IT

1. Spread a mat on the floor and lie flat on it on your back, exposing your whole body to sunlight.
2. Wear only minimum clothing. You may use a thin pillow, if you like.
3. The head must be shaded during the sun bath. As strong sunlight is powerfully heating and stimulating when it penetrates into the sensitive brain, it is advisable to protect the head with a green plantain leaf or a wet towel during a sun bath.
4. Do not lie in one position longer than five minutes at a time. Change your position frequently by turning on all sides so that the entire body is benefited.
5. Another method of sun bath adopted in many health centres in India today is as follows: The subject is made to lie in an open space on a bed of plantain leaves. He is then covered fully with a thin layer of the same leaves through which the sun's rays penetrate for about half an hour.

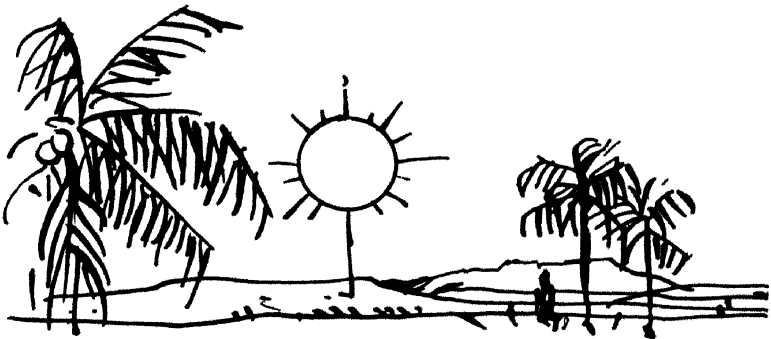
AFTER SUNBATH

1. The sun bath should be followed by a cold shower, or you may cool your exposed parts by pouring cold water over them to cool them,
2. Never bathe immediately after a sun bath; allow the body to cool down for about ten minutes.

TIME

1. The heat of the sunshine should be tolerable to the body when sun bath is taken.
2. The best time to take a sun bath is between 9 and 10.30 a.m. In summer, the best time would be between 8 and 9 a.m. Never take a sun bath between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.
3. While taking a sun bath, sunlight should be imbibed in small doses at first. Start with ten minutes at a stretch and increase the exposure gradually up to 15 minutes.

CAUTION

1. Beginners should take sun bath by stages, as indicated below: 1. Until a pleasant warmth is felt. 2. Until sweating begins. 3. The sweat should be wiped off with a wet towel that has been wrung out and the practice continued as long as comfortable.
2. Do not carry over your sun bath to the point of exhaustion or severe sunburn. Prolonged exposure of the body to the sun is harmful as it may cause an appearance of the skin often referred to as premature ageing or actinic damage characterised by a dry, coarse, leathery appearance, laxity with wrinkling, and various pigmentary changes.
3. Do not cover the face during a sun bath. Close your eyes and never look directly at the sun.

20 SUN TEMPLES

During the ancient Vedic times, the Sun was worshipped with great fervour through chants and rituals and it is believed that during this period there were no idols or temples dedicated to this deity. Temples to the Sun were built in India from about the 4th century A.D. which were majestic and beautiful.

Sun temples and sun pools have been built in India from ancient times where patients could both worship and cure their diseases. One such temple still exists in Unava in Datia District where patients with skin diseases still visit with many of them getting cured.

Temples to Surya as *Pradhana Devata* (main deity) are found today in Kashmir, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Bengal, Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Orissa and Tamil Nadu.

There is a Sun temple in Baroda and one near the huge Jain temple at Ranakpur.

The Marthanda temple at Mattan (Kashmir) was built by Lalitaditya, a Kashmiri ruler, in the 8th century A.D.

The Sun temple at Madhora in Rajasthan was built in mediaeval times.

A famous temple of the Sun glorified in a Gupta inscription was constructed by silk weavers in Daśhapura in Gujarat in the time of Skanda Gupta.

The fragments of a pillar from Kanchipuram with the *Surya Sataka* (One hundred verses in praise of Surya) inscribed in *Grantha* characters of the early Chola period reveal the fact that a complete *Mandapam* (pillared pavilion) existed for Surya giving the entire text of the *Surya Sataka* by Mayura.

The Suryanarayana temple at Suryanarkoil in Tanjore District (Tamil Nadu) was built by the Chola Emperor, Kulothunga I, in c. 1100 A.D.

The wonderful *Navagraha* carving in Gangaikondacholapuram in Tamil Nadu with Sūrya depicted as a large lotus on a chariot drawn by seven horses, with the rest of the planets

Surya-Narayana, Sun Temple, Konarak, 13th cent. A.D.

facing the eight directions, is a glorification of the Sun concept and adored even today as a *Navagraha Peeta* (altar).

The Sun temple at Konarak, the most famous Sun temple in India in the form of a chariot drawn by seven horses, was built by the Eastern Ganga ruler, Narasimha, in 1238 A.D.

There are a number of *Mandapams* in the Chola country (Tanjore in Tamil Nadu) in the form of a chariot on wheels. The wheels portray the twelve *Adityas* (suns). Besides this, a number of Mandapams carry on their ceiling the twelve zodiacal signs with the Sun in the centre.

Sculptural representation of Surya in stone and in metal are also found in many temples in India today.

In all temples, Surya appears as a secondary deity *(Parivara Devata)*.

The space around the main sanctum in all temples personifies the twelve *Adityas* in the *Vastu Pada Vinyasa* (architectural lay-out diagram).

In some temples, a stone altar called *Saura Peeta* (solar altar) receives daily worship.

In temple rituals, Surya in a Siva temple is deified as *Siva Surya* , and in Vishnu temples as *Surya Narayana.*

The Vishu Ayana and Samkramana festivals in temples are dedicated to the movements of the Sun God.

The Samkranti festival, known as *Pongal* in Tamil Nadu, is dedicated to the Sun God.

NEED FOR REVIVAL OF SUN WORSHIP

Though many temples exist for the Sun God in India today, some of which are architectural marvels, the worship of the Sun in these temples by ardent devotees has dwindled much. Trustees of temples, philanthropists and social workers should come forward and make concerted efforts to revive worship in these temples.

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21 ADITYA HRIDAYAM

(Hymns in Praise of the Sun God)

Aditya Hridayam is mentioned in Valmiki Ramayana (*Yuddha Kanda*, Chapter 107).

Sage Agastya, who came to witness the battle between Rama and Ravana, revealed this *Mantra* to Lord Rama.

The enormous benefits which could be derived by chanting this *Mantra* with devotion were expounded by Agastya himself to Lord Rama who considered Himself as a human being.

This *Mantra* could be chanted daily and in times of emergency, stress and risk to life and when one is in great fear. It will remove all obstacles and bring success to one in all his endeavours. It will also eradicate mental conflicts and bring peace of mind.

|| स्तोत्रम् ||

ततो युद्धपरिश्रान्तं समरे चिन्तया स्थितम्।
रावणं चाग्रतो दृष्ट्वा युद्धाय समुपस्थितम्॥ १ ॥

दैवतैश्च समागम्य द्रष्टुमभ्यागतो रणम्।
उपागम्याब्रवीद्राम-मगस्त्यो भगवान् ऋषिः ॥ २ ॥

1. & 2. Then the all-knowing Sage Agastya, who had come and joined the Gods to witness the fierce battle, seeing Rama who was lost in deep thought, utterly exhausted in battle and yet facing Ravana who was ready for a fresh encounter, spoke (to him thus):

राम राम महाबाहो श्रृणु गुह्यं सनातनम्।
येन सर्वानरीन् वत्स समरे विजयिष्यसि॥ ३ ॥

3. Oh Rama, mighty-armed Sri Rama, listen (to this) eternal secret whereby you shall vanquish in battle all your foes.

आदित्यहृदयं पुण्यं सर्वशत्रुविनाशनम् ।
जयावहं जपेन्नित्य-मक्षय्यं परमं शिवम् ॥ ४ ॥

4. (This) Holy (hymn) to the presiding deity of the Sun, if chanted fervently, will result in the destruction of all (your) enemies and bring you victory and unending supreme felicity.

सर्वमंगल-माङ्गल्यं सर्वपापप्रणाशनम् ।
चिन्ताशोक-प्रशमन-मायुर्वर्धन-मुत्तमम् ॥ ५ ॥

5. It is supreme (in that) it is a guarantee of all-round prosperity, destroyer of all sin, allayer of anxiety and anguish, and bestower of logevity.

रश्मिमन्तं समुद्यन्तं देवासुर-नमस्कृतम् ।
पूजयस्व विवस्वन्तं भास्करं भुवनेश्वरम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. Do thou worship (with this hymn) the One (Sun) held in veneration by Devas and Asuras, possessed of (golden coloured) rays when he has wholly risen (in the morning), who eclipses as it were (other luminous bodies) by his appearance (on the firmament), the (resplendent) Lord of the universe by whose effulgence all else brighten.

सर्वदेवात्मको ह्येष तेजस्वी रश्मि-भावनः ।
एष देवासुरगणांल्लोकान् पाति गभस्तिभिः ॥ ७ ॥

7. He verily represents all celestial beings. He is self-luminous and is the sustainer of all with his rays. He protects the inhabitants of all the worlds as well as the race of the Devas and Asuras with rays that nourish and energize.

एष ब्रह्मा च विष्णुश्च शिव: स्कन्द. प्रजापति. ।
महेन्द्रो धनद: कालो यम· सोमो ह्यपां पति: ॥ ८ ॥

8. He (the presiding deity of the Sun) is (indeed) all these - Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the sustainer), Siva (the destroyer). Skanda the Divine Generalissimo (the annihilator of all foes), Prajapati (the Lord of all creatures), Mahendra (the King of the celestial beings), Kubera (the dispenser of riches), Kala (the Lord of Time), Yama (the Lord of Death), Soma (the one that nourishes), and the Lord of the Waters (God Varuna).

पितरो वसव: साध्या ह्यश्विनौ मरुतो मनु: ।
वायु-र्वह्नि: प्रजाप्राण ऋतुकर्ता प्रभाकर: ॥ ९ ॥

9. He is also the Pitrs (the ancestral Manes), the Vasus (the eight dispensers of treasures), the Sadhyas (Yogis turned semi-divine), the twin Aswini Devas (the celestial physicians), the Maruts (also celestial beings), Manu (the all-knowing and primeval Sovereign, Vayu (the wind God), Agni (the God of fire), the vital air (sustaining from within) in all created beings, the maker of the six seasons by virtue of his alternating forms of energy (heat, light, etc.), and essentially the source of all light (the awakener of knowledge).

आदित्य: सविता सूर्य: खग: पूषा गभस्तिमान् ।
सुवर्णसदृशो भानु-र्हिरण्यरेता दिवाकर: ॥ १० ॥

10. He (the Sun) is the son of Aditi (the Mother of all Devas), the creator of the universe, the inspirer of action, the courser in the Heavens, the sustainer, the illuminator of the directions, the golden-hued brilliance, the Cosmic Seed, and the Maker of the Day.

हरिदश्व· सहस्रार्चि: सप्तसप्ति-मरीचिमान्।
तिमिरोन्मथन: शंभुस्त्वष्टा मार्तण्ड अंशुमान्॥ ११ ॥

11. He is the All-pervading One with rays countless, the power behind the seven sense organs (the two eyes, the two ears, the two nostrils and the tongue) and the dispeller of darkness (ignorance). He is the bestower of happiness and prosperity (inclusive of Absolution), the remover of the misfortunes of his votaries; the infuser of life, and the Omnipresent Being (whose rays penetrate everywhere).

हिरण्यगर्भ: शिशिरस्तपनो भास्करो रवि: ।
अग्निगर्भोऽदिते. पुत्र: शंख: शिशिरनाशन: ॥ १२ ॥

12. He is the primordial One who has become the Trinity — Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra, the ambrosial soothing influence, the store-house of riches (Aisvarya), the usherer in of the Day, the Great teacher (of even Hiranyagarbha), the fire-wombed Narayana (who has the fire of doom within himself), the son of Aditi (the mother of the Devas), felicity that is supreme and vast like the expanse, and the remover of intellectual stupor or evilmindedness.

व्योमनाथस्तमोभेदी ऋग्यजुस्सामपारग: ।
घनवृष्टिरपां मित्रो विन्ध्यवीथी प्लवंगम: ॥ १३ ॥

13. He is the Lord of the firmament; the Dispeller of darkness; the Master par excellence of the three Vedas-Rik, Yajus and Sama; He from whom comes the downpour of rain (He the great dispenser of the fruits of Karma); the friend of the waters: figuratively the friend and benefactor of the pure - minded, (and the One who with one bound) crossed the Vindhya range, who sports in the Brahma Nadi.

आतपी मण्डली मृत्युः पिंगलः सर्वतापनः.।
कविर्विश्वो महातेजा रक्तः सर्वभवोद्भवः ।। १४ ।।

14. He is the One intensely absorbed (in creating the cosmos), with form circular (figuratively, adorned with gems Kaustubha and the like); He is the inflictor of death (fig. destroyer of impediments); He is the Yellow-coloured one (rising sun) (fig. the motive force of the Pingala Nadi inducing action); He is the destroyer of all; He is the Omniscient One whose form is the universe (fig. the sustainer of the universe); and who is exceedingly energetic and the beloved of all and the generator of all action.

नक्षत्रग्रहतारणा-मधिपो विश्वभावनः ।
तेजसामपि तेजस्वी द्वादशात्मन्नमोऽस्तु ते ।। १५ ।।

15. He is the Lord of stars, planets and constellations and the origin of everything in the universe, the resplendent cause of the lustre of even the brilliant ones (such as the sun etc.,) the one sentient Being manifest in the twelve forms of the Sun. Salutations to Thee.

नमः पूर्वाय गिरये पश्चिमायाद्रये नमः ।
ज्योति-र्गणानां पतये दिनाधिपतये नमः ।। १६ ।।

16. Salutations to the (presiding deity of the) Eastern mountain (where the sun rises) and the Western mountain (where it sets), salutations to the Lord of the stellar bodies and also to the Lord of Day.

जयाय जयभद्राय हर्यश्वाय नमो नमः ।
नमो नमः सहस्रांशो आदित्याय नमो नमः ।। १७ ।।

17. Salutations unto Him that ordains victory (fig) in the quest after liberation. A commentator associates it with

Jaya, one of the two Devarahasyas and the prosperity that flows from such victory (associated with Jayabhadra, the other Dwarapalaka), and unto Him possessed of yellow steeds, salutations to the thousand-rayed Lord, (figuratively; of whose Amsa are the thousands of Jivas), and to Aditya salutations again.

नम उग्राय वीराय सारंगाय नमो नमः ।
नमः पद्मप्रबोधाय मार्तण्डाय नमो नमः ।। १८ ।।

18. Salutations to the Terrible One (who is relentless to those who do not keep their senses under control); the hero (who ably directs his powers in purposeful achievement such as the prowess in slaying Tripura, etc.), the One that traverses fast (fig. leading on to the realisation of Pranava, the quintessence of all Hindu scriptures), salutations to the One whose emergence makes the lotus blossom (fig. the awakener of the lotus in the heart), and to the fierce and omnipotent One.

ब्रह्मेशानाच्युतेशाय सूर्यायादित्यवर्चसे ।
भास्वते सर्वभक्षाय रौद्राय वपुषे नमः ।। १९ ।।

19. Salutations to the Over-Lord of Brahma, Siva and Achyuta (the creator, destroyer and protector respectively), salutations to the powerful and to the intrinsic effulgence in the Sun that is at once the illuminator and the devourer of all and is of a form that is fierce like that of Rudra.

तमोघ्नाय हिमघ्नाय शत्रुघ्नायामितात्मने ।
कृतघ्नघ्नाय देवाय ज्योतिषां पतये नमः ।। २० ।।

20. Salutations to the Transcendental Atman that dispels darkness (fig. ignorance), drives away all fear (that grips

like cold) and destroyer of foes (both internal and external), salutations also to the annihilator of the ungrateful and to the Lord that rules over all stellar bodies.

तप्तचामीकराभाय वह्नये विश्वकर्मणे।
नमस्तमोऽभिनिघ्नाय रुचये लोकसाक्षिणे॥ २१ ॥

21. Salutations to the Lord shining like molten gold; salutations to the transcendental fire, the fire of Supreme knowledge; salutations to the architect of the universe; salutations to the destroyer of darkness, salutations again to the effulgent sentience that is also the Cosmic witness.

नाशयत्येष वै भूतं तदेव सृजति प्रभुः।
पायत्येष तपत्येष वर्षत्येष गभस्तिभिः॥ २२ ॥

22. Salutations to the Lord who destroys everything that is and creates them all again, and salutations to Him who by His rays consumes the waters, heats them up (into water vapour) and sends them down again as rain.

एष सुप्तेषु जागर्ति भूतेषु परिनिष्ठितः।
एष एवाग्निहोत्रं च फलं चैवाग्निहोत्रिणाम्॥ २३ ॥

23. Salutations to the Lord who abides in the heart of all beings, keeping awake even when they are asleep. He is both sacrificial fire and the fruit enjoyed by the worshippers thereof.

वेदाश्च क्रतवश्चैव क्रतूनां फलमेव च।
यानि कृत्यानि लोकेषु सर्व एष रविः प्रभुः ॥ २४ ॥

24. The Sun is indeed the Lord of all action in this universe. He is verily the Vedas, the sacrifices ordained therein and the fruits thereof.

फलश्रुति:

एन-मापत्सु कृच्छ्रेषु कान्तारेषु भयेषु च।
कीर्तयन् पुरुष. कश्चिन्नावसीदति राघव॥ २५ ॥

25 Oh Raghava, he who recites this hymn in times of peril, during affliction, while (lost) in the wilderness and when beset with fear, will not lose heart.

पूजयस्वैन-मेकाग्रो देवदेवं जगत्पतिम्।
एतत्त्रिगुणितं जप्त्वा युद्धेषु विजयिष्यासि॥ २६ ॥

26. Worship thou, Oh Raghava, this God of all Gods, the Almighty Lord of the Universe, with one-pointed devotion. Reciting this hymn thrice you shall emerge victorious in battle.

अस्मिन्क्षणे महाबाहो रावणं त्वं वधिष्यसि।
एवमुक्त्वा तदागस्त्यो जगाम च यथागतम्॥ २७ ॥

27. This very moment, Oh mighty-armed One! you shall triumph over Ravana. Having spoken thus, Agastya returned whence he had come.

एतच्छ्रुत्वा महातेजा नष्टशोकोऽभवत्तदा।
धारयामास सुप्रीतो राघव: प्रयतात्मवान्॥ २८ ॥

28. Having heard this, the illustrious Raghava became free from worry. He felt Himself fortified, full of ardour and greatly pleased.

आदित्यं प्रेक्ष्य जप्त्वा तु परं हर्षमवाप्तवान्।
त्रिराचम्य शुचिर्भूत्वा धनुरादाय वीर्यवान्॥ २९ ॥

29. Gazing intently at Aditya and reciting this Hymn, He experienced supreme felicity. Purifying Himself after sipping water thrice, the Mighty One took up his bow.

रावणं प्रेक्ष्य हृष्टात्मा युद्धाय समुपागमत् ।
सर्वयत्नेन महता वधे तस्य धृतोऽभवत् ।। ३० ।।

30. Seeing Ravana (in front of Him), he was delighted and came forth to fight. He put forth all his effort, determined on annihilating him (Ravana).

अथ रवि-रवद-न्निरीक्ष्य रामं
मुदितमना: परमं प्रहृष्यमाण: ।
निशिचरपति - संक्षयं विदित्वा
सुरगण-मध्यगतो वचस्त्वरेति ।। ३१ ।।

31. Then, knowing that the destruction of the lord of the prowlers at night was at hand. Aditya (the Sun), the central figure in the assembly of the Devas, looked at Rama with mind filled with delight and exclaimed 'HURRY UP'

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